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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Chief on Peace, Somalia, Libyan Crisis

NC0110082393 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Telephone interview with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid in New York by Fawzi al-Jundi in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" Program"; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-Majid] What we now sense during UN meetings is an interest in Middle East developments, and I can say that all speakers—heads of state, prime ministers, and foreign ministers—spoke positively about the progress in the peace process and were eager for its continuation on all tracks. This is very encouraging, and we feel that we are working to establish the bases of a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The interest shown at the UN General Assembly is proof of this.

[Al-Jundi] Do you believe that Libya's stand on handing over two Libyan suspects is the end of the road for the Lockerbie crisis?

['Abd-al-Majid] Actually, the situation has changed after the Libyan stand so I do not believe that there is an intention to escalate the sanctions at present.

[Al-Jundi] Is the trend likely to be toward lifting these sanctions?

['Abd-al-Majid] Of course, this is possible in light of the consultations scheduled to take place today and tomorrow. These are urgent consultations and we are following them with interest.

[Al-Jundi] Do you think that the situation has reached the end, a peaceful end?

['Abd-al-Majid] Yes, of course, I consider this to be an important opportunity. Libya has once again shown resilience and we hope the other party will respond to this resilience.

[Al-Jundi] Let us move from the Libyan-Western crisis to other issues, such as peace in the Middle East. Does the Arab League believe that the United Nations is able to play an important role in implementing the Palestinian-Israeli accord?

['Abd-al-Majid] Undoubtedly. As I said, interest has been shown in the General Assembly meetings that are currently being held at the highest level. There is a clear desire by the international community represented by the United Nations to motivate efforts for a comprehensive and just peace in our region.

[Al-Jundi] Is there cooperation between you and the international organization to revive the Palestinian economy?

['Abd-al-Majid] Yes, there are continuous contacts with the international organization and a working meeting is scheduled to be held with the secretary general and his aides in three days.

[Al-Jundi] Let us have some details on the joint work.

['Abd-al-Majid] When we meet, we will discuss every possible aspect of cooperation between the international organization and the Arab League. In fact, that cooperation exists and is very encouraging.

[Al-Jundi] Regarding the current situation in Somalia, the United Nations is now working to settle the situation and not to escalate measures against General Mohamed Farah Aidid. How do you assess the UN move?

['Abd-al-Majid] As far as Somalia is concerned, the Arab League has made efforts to achieve national reconciliation among the Somali parties. We still advocate this reconciliation and are ready to support it among the Somali factions, which are fundamental to this issue. The United Nations and various countries tried to help Somalia emerge from its crisis. The Somali factions must reconcile with each other so that calm and stability can prevail in fraternal Somalia.

[Al-Jundi] Is the Arab League going to make any future move to settle the situation in Somalia?

['Abd-al-Majid] We are willing to cooperate and will raise this point during our contacts here in New York.

[Al-Jundi] Are you working to secure aid to improve the situation in Somalia?

['Abd-al-Majid] We are providing some assistance in the medical field but our capability in this area is, of course, limited.

[Al-Jundi] Let me return to the beginning and the settlement of the Lockerbie crisis between Libya and the three Western countries. How do you view the future of this crisis?

['Abd-al-Majid] The next two days will be crucial in this issue. We hope to reach an understanding and a settlement as a result of the Libyan proposal that the foreign minister conveyed to the UN secretary general yesterday.

Palestinian Affairs

Factions Announce Boycott of Central Council Meeting

PFLP Urges Total Boycott

JN3009191193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Damascus—An official spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] has said that the PFLP Central Committee has decided that

its delegates will not attend the PLO Central Council meeting, due to be held in Tunis in a few days.

In a statement published today, the spokesman added that, in principle, the PLO Central Council has no right to endorse decisions and agreements pertaining to the Palestinian people's fate and the Palestine question. The PFLP urged all Central Council members not to attend this meeting.

In another development, a responsible PFLP source said that the political situation and the situation in which 'Arafat has placed himself will certainly bring him to experience circumstances worse than those of [former] Soviet President Gorbachev in the near future. 'Arafat's fate will be no better than that of French General Petain during World War II, he said.

In a statement published today, the responsible source added: We are confident that ['Arafat's] inevitable fate will be a clear and harsh lesson to anyone who even contemplates the circumvention of the masses' will and objectives.

ALF Not To Attend

JN3009163893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The Arab Liberation Front [ALF], the pro-Iraqi Palestinian organization, has announced in Baghdad that it will boycott the meetings held by the PLO leadership, including the PLO Executive Committee meetings, in protest against the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli accord. In an interview with ALIF BA' magazine, Nasif 'Awwad, secretary general of the Arab Liberation Front, said that the front will hold contacts with all Palestinian factions, without exception, and with the independents to prevent the PLO Central Council from endorsing the accord during its meeting on 10 October.

Communist Party Calls for Boycott of Council Elections

JN3009171293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The Revolutionary Palestinian Communist Party has called for a boycott of the administrative council's elections. It also called for people not to join the Palestinian police forces, which are being prepared to be a repressive tool controlled by the Israelis in order to crush the heroic intifadah, subdue our people to occupation, and quell their spirit of resistance.

In a statement issued today following an expanded meeting, the party stressed the need for cooperation and coordination with Arab Syria and for standing alongside it in the face of the threats and pressures that Israel and the United States are exerting against it.

Concluding its statement, the party expressed absolute confidence in the Palestinian Arab people's capability to foil the new link in the conspiracy against their national cause.

DFLP's Khalid Criticizes PLO Leadership

PM3009130093 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 26 Sep-2 Oct 93 p26

[Unattributed interview with Taysir Khalid, member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; place and date not given]

[Text] [AL-MAJALLAH] You have resigned from the PLO Executive Committee. Is there any intention to form an alternative PLO?

[Khalid] Since last December Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] and his team have been holding negotiations with the Israeli Government in Oslo behind the backs of the Executive Committee and the other legitimate PLO bodies. It is no secret that Abu-'Ammar has for a long time been pursuing a policy of hegemony and individual monopoly of the PLO's political, financial, and administrative decisions. As regards formation of an alternative organization to the PLO, we wish to emphasize first of all that the PLO as we knew it no longer exists. Abu-'Ammar and his group have dealt an extremely severe blow to the foundation of the political alliance on which it had been based since 1968, and they went too far in yielding to the terms of Rabin's government. This means that Abu-'Ammar and his group are trying to form an alternative organization to the PLO through a new political alliance. We will resist that by mobilizing all forces to foil the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You were the first to call for and advocate a peaceful settlement. What happened to change that position?

[Khalid] We in the DFLP are not rejectionists. We were the first to call, in our national councils, for negotiated solutions guaranteeing our people's legitimate rights.

That remains our position. We have not deviated from the resolutions passed by the national councils. Abu-'Ammar and his group were the ones who deviated from these resolutions when they accepted a solution based on capitulation to the occupation, on ceding national sovereignty, on acknowledging Israel's responsibility for security in the occupied territory and for the borders, bridges, and crossing points, and on turning Gaza, Jericho, and the rest of the West Bank into protectorates under Israeli sovereignty, not to mention suspension of the issue of 4 million Palestinian refugees.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There can be no doubt that the agreement does have some negative aspects. Do you not see any positive aspects that could form the nucleus of future progress?

[Khalid] The agreement has many negative points. It completely closes the door to self-determination and independence. The agreement was drafted in clear unambiguous terms. It, therefore, must be foiled as an indispensable basis in the search for a relatively just and balanced negotiated settlement.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Some people expect the outbreak of a Palestinian civil war. Do you believe the ingredients of such a war really exist?

[Khalid] We, of course, do not wish to reach the point of civil war. We belong to the camp of democracy and freedom of expression despite the vast gulf that separates us from Abu-'Ammar and his group. But we must bear in mind that, in the document recognizing Israel, Abu-'Ammar pledged to punish every PLO member who operates against the occupation forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

That is a serious pledge. If it is carried out and if it results in clashes between those who made the pledge, their security organs, or anyone else on the one hand and the forces which intend to continue the struggle against the occupation authorities and forces, then we would hold Abu-'Ammar and his group responsible for that.

In order not to reach such a point, we in the DFLP suggest that the Gaza-Jericho agreement should be subject to a public referendum with the participation of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territory and that the result of the referendum should be binding on all the Palestinian forces and factions within the PLO and also outside the PLO framework.

[AL-MAJALLAH] If a [Palestine] National Council [PNC] session is held in Jericho, would you attend it?

[Khalid] That is a hypothetical question. We are opposed to the next PNC becoming a session of a PNC appointed by bureaucratic, high-handed decisions. Instead, we propose preparation for a PNC elected by the Palestinian people in the occupied homeland and the diaspora. Once that is achieved, the venue for a PNC meeting would not be a problem.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Would you participate in the autonomy elections if held?

[Khalid] Such elections are not imminent. What is imminent is the appointment of Palestinian administrative officers to replace the Israeli administrative officers subject to the Israeli Government's approval. The DFLP will not be a party to a plan that turns the areas occupied during the 1967 aggression into protectorates under Israeli sovereignty.

DFLP's Hawatimah Calls for General Referendum

PM3009111093 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 26 Sep-2 Oct 93 p 31

[Unattributed interview with Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; place and date not given]

[Text] AL-MAJALLAH asked Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], if he had an alternative to the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

[Hawatimah] Our alternative in the DFLP is ready and immediate. It is the Palestinian intifadah in the occupied territory which should continue until the occupation ends and the Palestinian people are able to determine their own fate. One alternative is negotiation on the basis of full representation of the Palestinian people and with the aim of establishing a comprehensive peace through Resolutions 242, 338, and 194. We are now working and preparing for the formation of a broad national front.

We are also preparing for a conference representing all the West Bank and Gaza, including Jericho and Arab east Jerusalem, to enable the Palestinian people in the occupied territory to declare that 'Arafat's signature does not represent them and that 'Arafat had no right to sign on behalf of the Palestinian people. The national conference in the occupied territory will also announce the formation of a united leadership that will be the people's unified authority.

We advocate a ready and immediate alternative to the Gaza-Jericho agreement, namely a general referendum covering the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territory, and if 'Arafat and his group do not heed the people's verdict if they reject the agreement, then we would call for the election of a new Palestine national council from the base to the summit, inside and outside, and new PLO institutions would be elected including a new central council and a new executive committee. The DFLP is very widely represented in the ranks of the Palestinian people. If the DFLP and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] are joined together we would have a majority within the PLO and within the Palestinian people's ranks on the ground inside and outside the occupied territory.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Will you participate in the next elections, and will the opposition be political or armed opposition?

[Hawatimah] There is no question of autonomy elections. We will continue the armed struggle in the occupied territory and against the settlements.

[AL-MAJALLAH] How will you be able to continue your armed struggle and get arms when most states have supported the agreement?

[Hawatimah] We have our own means of increasing our military capabilities through Arab or foreign states regardless of their rejection or support for the agreement. There is an open arms market, and it is still possible to get arms to the field despite the difficulties.

Hamas' Ghawshah Urges Election of New Leadership

PM3009105493 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 26 Sep-2 Oct 93 p25

[Unattributed interview with engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for Hamas; place and date not given]

[Text] [AL-MAJALLAH] Is it true that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is working for the formation of an alternative PLO?

[Ghawshah] As soon as 'Arafat recognized Israel and signed the declaration of principles agreement, the PLO ceased to exist. It became a political party. Palestine was ceded to the Zionist state and there was nothing left for the PLO to liberate. That is why the Palestinian people in the diaspora and inside [the occupied territories] must elect a new leadership that would seek to fulfill their objectives of repatriation, liberation, and self-determination. Hamas has called for a general national conference of Islamic and Palestinian nationalist figures to draw up a political and jihad program on the basis of insistence on the Palestinian people's principles and also to elect a temporary leadership for this crucial phase until a permanent leadership is elected by direct free ballot.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Some people fear an outbreak of Palestinian civil war. Is that a possibility?

[Ghawshah] Motivated by principles and patriotism, Hamas has warned against such a war. It calls for nonviolent democratic change because only the Zionist enemy would benefit from infighting. That is despite the fact that the Zionists are urging 'Arafat's men and others to muzzle and liquidate our movement. Hamas is an Islamic movement that exists in Gaza and the West Bank and has supporters throughout the world. Those who are trying to foment sedition should understand that the consequences would be grave.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Will you take part in the Palestinian autonomy elections?

[Ghawshah] Hamas' position on the administrative self-rule is one of rejection and that applies to participation in the institutions that will stem from the next elections. We will call on the Palestinian people to boycott these elections.

PLO Protests Broadcast of Hamas Aide's Interview

PM3009113193 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 29 Sep 93 pp 1, 4

[Ahmad 'Uthman Jibril report: "42,000 Apply To Join Palestinian Police; PLO Protests Against Sudanese Action"]

[Text] Tunis, Khartoum, AL-HAYAH—Well-informed Palestinian sources in Tunis have said that so far 42,000 people in the occupied Arab territories have applied to join the Palestinian police. The sources pointed out that the Palestinian leadership, which is currently discussing in Tunis the possibility of forming a transitional government under Yasir 'Arafat or a transitional council, insists that all police forces should be from inside the territories and the Palestinian regular forces regarded as the Palestinian army.

Commenting on the 42,000 applications submitted to join the Palestinian police, a leading Palestinian figure said: "It seems that our people are yearning for power." However, he added that the huge number of applicants seeking to join the police also reflects the popularity of the agreement the PLO leadership reached with Israel, on the one hand, and the bad economic situation in the occupied territories, on the other.

In Khartoum AL-HAYAH has learned that the PLO office there has submitted an official protest to the Sudanese Government, criticizing it for allowing Khalid Mash'al, a senior Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) leader, to use Sudanese government-controlled media services to condemn the agreement on Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Ambassador Abu-Raja'i, director of the PLO office in Khartoum, said at a seminar he held the day before yesterday at the Khartoum University Institute for African and Asian Studies that Khartoum should not have allowed its media services to be made available to those opposed to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed on 13 September.

Sudanese television last week broadcast an interview with Mash'al, member of the Hamas Political Bureau, in which he described the agreement as "high treason." He also said that the Palestinian leadership "ignored the most serious issues: the settlements, Jerusalem, the holy places, and the Palestinian refugees' repatriation." He also said that these issues "have disappeared and become pending questions." He added that the area of Gaza and Jericho represents less than 2 percent of the total area of Palestinian territory, and that Israel "is deceiving the Palestinian leadership with its talk about sovereignty in Gaza and Jericho. No political sovereignty will be granted to the leadership. It will be a political administration handling municipal work. Power, sovereignty over the land, foreign policy, and external security will be Israel's responsibility."

He added that Gaza "is a heavy burden" on Israel because of its population density. Mash'al quoted Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres as saying that "Jericho is a haunted place; its inhabitants and those living in it are cursed."

He wondered: "In return for what are the Palestinian people paying the price for their recognition of Israel?" He added that the Arab states will begin to normalize diplomatic relations with the Hebrew state, and "the Palestinian people will then have lost everything."

He said that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement "is not binding on the Palestinian people or Hamas." He also warned that the movement would continue the "resistance and the jihad, and the intifadah and battles led by the Palestinian battalions together with Hamas will continue in the Palestinian territories."

However, he stressed that Hamas would not implicate itself in "a civil war except if the Palestinian leadership embark on fabricating battles." He added that Hamas would be eager to "ignore" these battles, because "our battle is with the Zionist enemy only."

PFLP-GC Sees 'Inevitable End' of 'Arafat's Career

JN3009201393 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] has issued the following press release:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. A press release issued by the PFLP-GC. Commenting on 'Arafat's statements regarding his appeal to the IMF and the appeal he made for urgent help before he turns into another Gorbachev, a responsible source within the PFLP-GC has stated the following:

The political situation and position in which 'Arafat has placed himself will certainly, shortly make him experience circumstances worse than those experienced by Gorbachev. In fact, 'Arafat's future will be no better than that of General Petain, who betrayed his homeland, France, during World War II, or of the future of agent General Antoine Lahd in southern Lebanon.

We are confident that the inevitable end of 'Arafat's political career and personal future will be a clear, harsh lesson for all those who contemplate circumventing the will of the masses and betraying their objectives.

[Signed] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command

Jibril: Gaza-Jericho Agreement Has No Legitimacy

PM3009105693 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 26 Sep-2 Oct 93 p30

[Unattributed report: "Ahmad Jibril Tells AL-MAJALLAH: We Do Not Have a Magic Alternative"]

[Text] Commenting on the Gaza-Jericho agreement, Ahmad Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], said: "Neither that agreement nor those who concluded it have any legitimacy. The Palestinian people have the real legitimacy. The Palestinian factions assumed responsibility for the PLO after 1968. These factions have rejected the agreement. Even Fatah has been split from within. That is why it cannot be said that 'Arafat represents legitimacy, not without a Palestinian popular referendum. The Gaza-Jericho First agreement will have repercussions for the Palestinian people. There are 7 million Palestinians, 4 million of them in the diaspora and 3 million inside [the occupied territories]. Have the Palestinian people been asked if they accept the agreement? They have a right to determine what they deem fit. We reject the agreement because it is most unjust and least fair."

On alternatives, he said: "We do not have a magic alternative. The operations against Israel in southern Lebanon should have continued. That would have compelled it to withdraw from the border strip."

PLO-Tunis Said Behind Murder of Gaza Attorney

TA0110110893 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Oct 93 p A1

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpts] A PLO activist in the Gaza Strip was the man who murdered Attorney Mahmud Ibrahim Abu-Sha'ban, one of the most prominent Fatah activists in the Strip. The suspected murderer lives in Gaza. [passage omitted]

It has been learned that the order to kill Abu-Sha'ban emanated from the PLO-Tunis leadership; it was the result of an internal conflict that emerged while the victim was a member of the political committees in the Strip. The murder was carried out by members of a Fatah Hawks squad.

Committee To Study Takeover of Gaza-Jericho Authority

NC3009173293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1607 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Tunis, 30 Sep (MENA)—Palestine National Council Secretary Muhammad Subayh has stated that at its meeting last night under Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, the Palestinian leadership decided to form a

10-member committee to study proposals for taking over authority in Gaza and Jericho and to work out the necessary frameworks. In a statement today, he said the committee will formulate all the proposals in specific points to submit to the Palestinian leadership to endorse. He said the leadership will in turn submit the points to the PLO Central Council during its meetings scheduled to begin in Tunis on 10 October.

Algeria

Hearing Begins for Merbah Assassination Suspects

LD3009212793 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] A number of people belonging to the armed group involved in the assassination of Kasdi Merbah, former head of government and leader of the Algerian Movement for Justice and Development, and of those who were with him, were brought before the court this morning for a preliminary hearing.

This group consists of 36 persons, 18 of whom took part in the preparation and carrying out of the assassination of Kasdi Merbah. Six of them, who opened fire on Kasdi Merbah are still at large. One of the Hattab brothers was a commando on contract in Biskra. He is a former member of the Bouyali group.

Today all of those were present before the public prosecutor in the Algiers court. More than eight charges were levelled against them, including, in addition to the assassination of Kasdi Merbah, the formation of armed groups, premeditated murder, aggravated theft, collection of donations for the benefit of terrorist groups, and the formation of a criminal group.

A National Gendarmerie officer explains the circumstances surrounding the arrest of this group:

[Unidentified officer] Following the initial investigation, and thanks to the help of the citizens and some witnesses who were at the scene [of the assassination], our personnel were able to identify and arrest a gang consisting of 36 members which was active in the municipalities of Ain Taya, Bordj El Bahri, Serkouf, Benzerga, and the municipality of Bordj El Kiffan.

This gang was divided into detachments. The first detachment consisted of 22 individuals who are specialists in logistics and the collection of funds for the terrorists in order to buy supplies and weapons and to coordinate the distribution of inflammatory pamphlets especially in the mosques.

The second detachment consisted of 14 individuals who specialized in gathering information and intelligence, and monitoring every move and the habits of the late Kasdi Merbah, during his travels to and from Alger-Plage where his second [holiday] home was.

From the investigations and the information supplied by those individuals our services were also able to identify the members of the gang which carried out the treacherous operation. The names of these six people are: Hattab Abdelkader, alias Mouloud; Hattab Hacene; Hattab Toufik; Aissani Ahmed, alias Youcef; Tarzout Said; and Berriah Liyes. This group is still at large and the search is going on to arrest them and bring them to justice.

Egypt

More Opposition Leaders Meet With Mubarak

NC3009125193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] President Mubarak received Muhammad 'Abd-al-Mun'im Turk, leader of the opposition Democratic Unionist Party, and Dr. Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Al, leader of the opposition Social Justice Party, at the Presidential Office today.

President Husni Mubarak also received opposition Liberal Party Leader Mustafa Kamil Murad. A group of liberal officers attended the meeting.

Ummah Party Leader Ahmad al-Sabahi said after meeting President Mubarak today that President Mubarak has devoted himself to Egypt and its people, describing him as the most honest and fit to govern Egypt in the next stage. He noted that President Mubarak will lead the economic and democratic transition process successfully in the nation's interest, supported by the people's love and trust. He praised President Mubarak's wisdom and courage in dealing with all domestic and foreign issues.

Dr. 'Abd-al-'Al said he had conveyed to President Mubarak the Social Justice Party's support for his nomination for a third term of office in order to continue the process of achievements made in the past phase. He added that he had sensed during the meeting President Mubarak's support for and responsiveness to every serious effort to solve society's problems.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1051 GMT on 30 September adds in a similar report: "Liberal Party Leader Mustafa Kamil Murad has affirmed that party's and the liberal officers group's support for President Mubarak's nomination for a third term of office."

["After an audience with President Mubarak today, he said that the liberal officers support President Mubarak for a third term of office in appreciation of his services in domestic and foreign policy issues. He expressed hope that Egypt will proceed with wide strides in all spheres during President Mubarak's rule."]

Suspected Muslim Extremists Detained After Raid

NC0110065893 Paris AFP in English 2310 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Asyut, Egypt, Oct 1 (AFP)—Security forces detained 30 suspected Muslim extremists Thursday [30 September] in a swoop on the town of al-Badari, 40 kilometers (25 miles) south of here, police announced.

The fundamentalists were suspected of taking part in attacks on police officers in the region, which claimed eight lives in September.

Al-Badari residents told AFP they heard gunshots during the two-hour operation.

Police denied that there had been any clashes or casualties.

Shots had only been fired to give cover to security forces searching sugar cane fields and citrus groves, considered favoured hiding places for the extremists, they said.

The sweep came four days before a referendum on a third term in office for President Husni Mubarak.

Mubarak, in an interview published Thursday in the semi-official AL-AHRAM newspaper, pledged to strengthen democracy in Egypt but keep up the fight against Islamic militants if he wins a mandate for another term in Monday's referendum.

The 18-month-long campaign of anti-government violence by Islamic militants has cost more than 200 lives.

Minister Tells British Team Tourism Picking Up

NC3009201593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1812 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Cairo, 30 Sep (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has said tourism in Egypt is picking up after the security authorities foiled several attempts to carry out criminal acts.

During his meeting today with David Elton, a member of Britain's Liberal Democratic Party, and his delegation, al-Alfi said Egypt is the country of all the heavenly religions. Its citizens of every religion enjoy the same rights guaranteed by the Constitution, indicating that there is no place for sectarian strife in Egypt.

Elton praised Egypt's stability and security.

Financial Protocol Signed With France

NC3009174093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1503 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Excerpt] Paris, 30 Sep (MENA)—Egypt and France today signed a financial protocol worth 600 million francs. Some 50 million francs are a grant and the rest soft loans. Egyptian Ambassador to France 'Ali Mahir said the protocol includes a grant and loans that will be repaid over 19 years including six years at low interest. He said the money will be used to fund basic projects in communications, railways, drinking water, sewage, medical equipment, and other projects. [passage omitted]

Libya

Foreign Minister Meets Butrus-Ghali, 'Abd-al-Majid

LD0110043593 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The brother secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation met in New York yesterday the UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali. The secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation also met in New York yesterday Dr. Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid the Arab League secretary general. During this meeting the crisis between the Great Jamahiriyah and the Western countries and the situation in the Arab region were discussed.

The secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation also met in New York yesterday afternoon Turkey's Foreign Affairs Minister Hikmet Cetin. During this meeting, bilateral relations between the Great Jamahiriyah and Turkey and ways of developing them were discussed. Also the crisis between the Great Jamahiriyah and the Western countries and the situation in the Mediterranean and in the Arab region were discussed.

Al-Zanati: No Objections to Suspects Standing Trial

LD3009123493 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1050 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Excerpts] Tunis, 30 Sep (JANA)—The brother al-Zanati Muhammad al-Zanati, secretary of the General People's Congress, expressed the Great Jamahiriyah's thanks and appreciation to all the African parliaments that yesterday unanimously decided to table the coercive measures imposed on the Great Jamahiriyah on the agenda of the 30th session of the executive committee and the 16th conference of the union of African parliaments meeting in Tunis these days. [passage omitted]

The brother secretary pointed out that the Great Jamahiriyah does not see any objection to the appearance of the two suspects before any just and impartial court on the condition they are convinced of that. [passage omitted]

Decision on Suspects Criticized

LD3009145693 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0915 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Tripoli, 30 Sep, (JANA)—AL-SHAMS newspaper published yesterday an article criticizing the Libyan Foreign Ministry titled "The Libyan Foreign Ministry Surrenders Our Sons to the British Government." Following is the text:

The AL-SHAMS newspaper learned that the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has sent a memorandum to the UN secretary general in which it agreed to surrender the two brothers "al-Amin [Khalifah] Fuhaymah and 'Abd-al-Basit ['Ali Muhammad] al-Mighrahi" either to the British or U.S. authorities.

The memorandum is in reply to the UN secretary general's memorandum, which included the U.S. and British Governments' viewpoints over the queries and suggestions presented by the Libyan Foreign Ministry.

The memorandum will be delivered to the UN secretary general by brother 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, who is currently in New York. The memorandum says: After studying the replies of the British and U.S. Governments, the Libyan Foreign Ministry has agreed to surrender the two brothers al-Amin Fuhaymah and 'Abd al-Basit al-Miqrahi to the judicial authorities in either of the two countries. All that remains is convincing the two to surrender, as well as convincing their families and folk of that.

The newspaper wants to point out that had the Libyan Foreign Ministry burdened itself with carefully reading the UN secretary general's memorandum, a copy of which we, alas, have not obtained as otherwise we would have published it for the readers so that they would know the complete truth, the Foreign Ministry would have discovered that the replies were vague and devoid of any clear commitment, that they were no more than a obvious temptation to neglect their sons, and that there are no true guarantees for a just and honest trial in which the actual perpetrators are uncovered and the truth is revealed.

The AL-SHAMS newspaper, which has often said it does not reflect the viewpoints of the revolutionary leadership in Libya, the people's congresses, and definitely not the Libyan Foreign Ministry, but expresses the viewpoints of its writers and editors and manifests the readers' views and interests and responds to their remarks and suggestions. The newspaper warns against the dangers of this direction the Foreign Ministry is following, the tunnel it leads to, and the subsequent outcome. Despite its desire to hold a fair trial for the suspects [passge indistinct]

AL-SHAMS expresses solidarity with the two brothers, al-Amin and 'Abd-al-Basit, and warns their families not to trust the Libyan Foreign Ministry because it is a tool in surrendering and abandoning their sons. It warns them not to trust the U.S. Administration and its propaganda nor the British Government and its scheming policies [dahqanah]. It assures the brothers that the Libyan people—despite attempts by those with trembling hands and those who do not count in battle and those who have neither a place under the sun nor a foothold in geography nor a space in history—will never abandon you and accept and yield to this farce and humiliation. The Libyan people will never abandon you or give you up. The Libyan people neither challenge the enemies in pretence nor accept the siege as an outbidding step. They have learned from history and have taught others that life is an honorable stand, because neither the thick stick of old Britain frightens them, nor do the fleets of tyrannical America terrorize them. They are fully aware that the state of injustice has an hour to survive and will perish afterward. The will of right is alive forever until doomsday.

Morocco

Military Cooperation Talks With France Reported

LD3009224993 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, coordinator of Bureaus and Departments of the General Staff of the Royal Armed Forces, and Admiral Lanxade, chief of the General Staff of the French Armed Forces, cochaired a meeting in Rabat this morning of the joint Moroccan-French military cooperation committee. Admiral Lanxade, chief of the General Staff of the French Armed Forces, spoke at the beginning of this meeting and stressed the importance of relations which go back many years between the royal Armed Forces and the French forces. He emphasized that these relations permit officers from the two countries to work for the good of Morocco and of France.

Admiral Lanxade pointed out that the work which military experts from the two countries have done is aimed at renewing and giving an impetus to exchanges and potential cooperation between the royal Armed Forces and the French forces. The chief of the General Staff of the French Armed Forces stressed that the royal Armed Forces have reached a high standard in field operations, speaking in this respect about the work of the Moroccan detachment operating in Somalia.

He then touched on the work of the delegations of experts of the two countries, emphasizing that the standard and experience attained by the royal Armed Forces requires the intensification of cooperation between the two countries in the development of practical cooperation, a renewal of the exchanges between the two countries in the military field, and increased support in the form of equipment. Within this context, he indicated that this cooperation will be bolstered by the work of the joint committee which will convene once a year.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, coordinator of Bureaus and Departments of the General Staff of the Royal Armed Forces, then spoke. He stressed that today's Moroccan-French meeting followed on the visit which he made to France last February within the context of military cooperation between the two countries, with which both sides were satisfied. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohamed pointed out that the results attained so far are encouraging and called for this cooperation to be deepened and developed and given new impetus.

His royal highness indicated that the training and experience gained by the royal Armed Forces since their establishment call for attention to be devoted to aspects of technological cooperation.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed stressed that the instructions of His Majesty King Hassan II, supreme commander and chief of the General Staff of the Royal Armed Forces, stressed the need for

the royal Armed forces to acquire the means of mastering technology. His royal highness touched on the intensification of exercise programs and joint scientific and technical training which requires the acquisition of field capabilities, the use of modern techniques and the transfer of technology. Logistics, mechanical [as heard] coordination, and the exchange of experts, his royal highness added, would allow cooperation in the military field between the two countries to develop normally.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, coordinator of the Bureaus and Departments of the General Staff of the Royal Armed Forces, pointed out that military cooperation between the two countries is heading toward a partnership. [passage omitted]

Sudan

RCC Chairman: Military Option Failed in Somalia

EA2909165593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Excerpt] Lt. Gen. Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the RCC [Revolution Command Council] and of the Council of Ministers, stressed that the application of a military solution to the Somali issue failed. He said that it is now necessary to look for a political solution. During his regular meeting today with media leaders, Lt. Gen. al-Bashir called for adherence to what had been resolved by the IGADD [Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development] states during their recent meeting in Addis Ababa to the effect that it was necessary to find a final solution to the Somali problem. He stressed that that the African Mediation Committee was capable of resolving the issue. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Discusses Ties With Kenyan Editor

EA2909171493 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 2245 GMT 28 Sep 93

[Text] Bishop Gabriel Rorech, minister of state at the Foreign Ministry, today met in his office Mr Ali Hafidh, editor in chief of the Kenyan newspaper, the STANDARD.

The minister of state spoke about the government's keenness in building confidence between the sons of the one homeland and its continuing efforts to establish peace throughout the south of the country.

The minister of state spoke of Sudan's good relations with its neighbours, particularly Kenya, whose president, Daniel Arap Moi, is chairing the committee formed by the IGADD [Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development] to reach a solution to the dispute existing in the south of the country. His excellency also spoke on the basis of a foreign policy which is based on respecting state sovereignty and on non-interference in other states' internal affairs—and on fruitful joint cooperation. He also dealt with the necessity and importance of Arab and African cooperation.

Official Comments on Amnesty International Views

EA3009184793 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Mr. Aldo Ajo Deng, deputy speaker of the Transitional National Assembly and chairman of the human rights committee, has condemned Amnesty International Organization and its stands. In statements about the false accusations directed by the organization against Sudan recently, he said that this organization has proved that it is not worthy of bearing the responsibility for human rights [words indistinct] and like its counterparts, namely the other international organizations, has pawned itself as a tool in the hands of the American colonialist and Western conspiracy to impose the so-called new world order.

He said the imposition by the Amnesty International Organization of [word indistinct] its unjust measures against Sudan is a regrettable and deplorable matter in that it is ignorant of the facts of the country's conditions. Mr. Aldo Ajo Deng affirmed that Sudan's friends realize well that peace is among the firm principles that the Sudanese Government has exercised and is still exercising in its true efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace. He pointed to the Sudanese Government's adherence to the general amnesty as confirmation of its strong eagerness for achieving peace.

His Excellency reviewed the intensive programs implemented by the state's various institutions in fulfillment of their duty toward the displaced people from the south. He explained that the allocation of peace villages for the displaced was made imperative by their influx in enormous numbers, nearly three million people.

Mr. Aldo Ajo Deng affirmed that the relevant ministries have in effect implemented numerous projects to house the displaced people and to provide essential services to them, in addition to their absorption in productive projects until they are able to rely on themselves, besides participating in the march of construction and development in the country.

Delegation Leaves for Lome Convention Meeting

EA3009195593 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] A Sudanese delegation, led by Mr 'Abd-al-Aziz Shiddu, minister of justice and attorney-general, has left for Brussels to participate in the meetings of the 17th session of the joint parliamentary council of the Lome Convention states.

Mr Abdallah Badri, a member of the delegation, stated that the council will discuss in its meetings, which begin on 4 October, the latest political developments, besides

evaluating economic and technical cooperation between the states of the African, Pacific, and Caribbean groups and the European Community states. The committee for reexamining the Lome Convention will continue its meeting on the periphery of the conference, where Sudan and Uganda represent East African states. He pointed out that the Group of 69 will hold deliberative meetings before the commencement of the sessions of the parliamentary council to coordinate between them.

Tunisia

President Ben Ali Holds Meeting With 'Arafat

LD0110053793 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] President Zine Abidine Ben Ali met at Carthage Palace this afternoon with the Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in the presence of Messrs Said Ben Mustapha, secretary of state to the minister of foreign affairs in charge of Maghreban affairs, and Hakam Bal'awi, member of Fatah Executive Committee.

After the meeting, President 'Arafat gave a statement in which he said that he was accorded the honor of meeting his excellency the president in the light of the important and historical developments through which the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people are passing, particularly after the signing of the [Gaza-Jericho] agreement to which President Zine Abidine Ben Ali had kindly contributed until it saw the light, a matter which our people will not forget for his excellency the president, Tunisia, its people, and its government. [passage omitted]

The Palestinian president pointed out that he discussed with President Zine Abidine Ben Ali some important issues to be followed up, and the practical implementation of the agreement. 'Arafat said: This requires an intensive and very great effort. His excellency the president expressed his complete readiness to help us in this respect. In particular, this is in connection with the issue of Holy Jerusalem, to which we have clearly referred in the agreement, be it in the transitional period, or the final phase, especially with respect to the Islamic and Christian holy places, and the Palestinian institutions, and the participation of our folk in Jerusalem in the forthcoming elections, which will be held after nine months.

He concluded his statement by describing the meeting as positive, warm, and fruitful, and renewed his thanks to his excellency the president on behalf of the Palestinian people.

Al-Qasimi Holds News Conference After U.S. Talks

PM2909134493 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Sep 93 pp 1, 4

[Rafiq Khalil al-Ma'luf report: "Cooperation Council: Boycott of Israel Linked to Achievement of Comprehensive Settlement"]

[Text] Washington—Shaykh Fahim al-Qasimi, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], has emphasized that he told U.S. officials that the issue of the Arab boycott of Israel must not be raised in a hurry, because the Hebrew state is still occupying the West Bank, the Golan, and areas in southern Lebanon. He pointed out that the abolition of the boycott "is linked to the achievement of a comprehensive peace," and the question is "secondary" compared with the question of eliminating Israeli weapons of mass destruction. At a press conference he held yesterday at the end of a visit to the U.S. capital, al-Qasimi added that he had urged the United States to urge Israel to destroy its nuclear arsenal, "because the Israeli nuclear threat is more dangerous than any Arab boycott." He pointed out that "we told them we are not at peace yet," and that the agreement between the PLO and Israel is "a declaration of principles. Israel is still occupying the West Bank, the Golan, and southern Lebanon. So why the rush, and why is Israel refusing to discuss the nuclear arms issue?"

He said that the boycott "is an Arab question, and there is a demand by some Arab states that the weapons of mass destruction should be eliminated, so why not link the two matters, especially as this is in our interests."

In his press conference, introduced by United Arab Emirates [UAE] Ambassador to Washington Muhammad al-Sha'ali, al-Qasimi said that the aim of his first visit to Washington was to consult with officials in the White House, State Department, and Congress over issues concerning the Gulf states and over U.S. policy vis-a-vis the region. He added that the talks dealt with the issues of Iraq and Iran and the peace process in the Middle East, especially the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

He announced that the GCC states support the agreement on the basis that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He cited the GCC states' participation in the Madrid conference and the multilateral negotiations based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the land-for-peace principle, and complete withdrawal from the Palestinian territories, first and foremost holy Jerusalem, as well as the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. He reiterated the GCC states' position on Iraq, saying: "We have nothing against the Iraqi people, but there is a difference between the people and the regime."

He stressed that the Iraqi regime must comply with all the Security Council resolutions. He pointed out that the Iraqi regime still has "aggressive intentions toward the region's states, hence the international sanctions against it should continue." He provided some examples of this, including Iraq's continued claim on Kuwait, its refusal to demarcate the border with it, its continued detention of 625 Kuwaiti prisoners, its refusal to admit their existence, and its refusal to allow international humanitarian organizations to visit them, let alone its failure to pay the compensation it owes to states and individuals.

He said that the GCC states consider Iran a neighboring and Muslim state "to which we are bound by old historical ties." These states wish to establish relations with Iran based on foundations "including noninterference in states' internal affairs, respect for their sovereignty over their territories, and compliance with international laws and conventions." He emphasized that the issue of the occupied islands [Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa] belonging to the UAE is at the heart of the dispute with Iran and that Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's visits to the Gulf states did not lead to a solution to the issue. "It has become clear that the Iranian position is not serious, and that the GCC states support the UAE's right and sovereignty over the three islands, including its right to use all peaceful means and to turn to the United Nations to recover the islands."

On his opinion of the U.S. theory of "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq, he said that it is still good, but U.S. officials have no clear ideas in this connection. He said that "the question at issue is, to what extent will this policy be able to isolate Iran or stop it from carrying out operations outside its borders? I point out that there is no answer to this question so far."

Kuwait

IAEA Asked To Increase Pressure on Iraq

LD3009152093 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1232 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Excerpt] Vienna, 30 Sep (KUNA)—Kuwait asked the IAEA to increase pressure on Iraq to implement all its commitments according to the UN Security Council resolutions. This demand was made by Kuwait's permanent delegation to the United Nations in Vienna, in a speech delivered by Faysal al-Ghis, head of the delegation and Kuwait's ambassador to Austria, to the agency's 37th conference, which is being held here today.

The Kuwaiti ambassador drew the attention of the 114 countries participating in the conference to the fact that Iraq is still refusing to implement its commitments, which were specified in the UN Security Council resolutions, whether they concern the activities of the agencies or the other issues arising from Iraq's brutal aggression on Kuwait on 2 August 1990. [passage omitted]

Official Denies Possible Parliament Dissolution

LD0110061693 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1104 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] London, 30 Sep (KUNA)—Second Deputy Prime Minister and Finance and Planning Minister Mr. Nasir al-Rawdan denied anew any possibility of dissolving the National Assembly or conducting a ministerial reshuffle in Kuwait, and considered the circulating rumors in this respect baseless.

In a special interview with the Lebanese AL-HAWADITH magazine, which will be published here tomorrow, Friday, Nasir al-Rawdan said that "there is no truth in these statements as there is no prospect for dissolving the National Assembly or conducting a ministerial reshuffle. These statements are merely circulating rumors which have no shadow of truth".

Al-Rawdan, who was talking to the newspaper in Cairo during his recent visit to Egypt to participate in the inauguration of a number of schools which were built with a grant from the Kuwaiti Government, added that "we reaffirm the denial made by Heir Apparent and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah, and also the denial made by the official spokesman of the government who is the Minister of Information, Shaykh Sa'ud Nasir al-Sabah." The Kuwaiti finance minister affirmed that the previous session of the National Assembly was characterized with the cooperation between the assembly and the government in the majority of the raised issues, pointing out that some clashes or differences of stances between the executive and legislative powers could take place, but that it is "a natural matter."

In reply to a question, Al-Rawdan pointed out that the issue of foreign investments was not an issue for the National Assembly only, but also an issue for the government, confirming that anyone who has participated or exploited his influence in this case has been referred to Kuwaiti public prosecution.

Al-Rawdan said that this case is one of the fundamental issues, and the discrepancy in the positions between the government and the assembly is only in the method of handling it. There is, however, a complete agreement on the goal.

In reply to a question on the so-called crisis of the Kuwaiti Defense Ministry's funds, the second deputy prime minister said: The competent committee at the National Assembly has decided on the sum of 3.5 billion Kuwaiti dinars over a period of 12 years. The council had another opinion, not reservation regarding the size of the sum. It was the wish to have it credited over consecutive budgets annually.

Al-Rawdan pointed out that the government had responded to that request and submitted a bill which was in that line.

Regarding difficult debts, the Kuwaiti minister of finance and planning said that a few weeks ago a new law had been decreed after the government and the National Assembly had agreed on it, which stipulated the rescheduling of debts due from debtors over a period of 12 years or immediate cash payment to be made at the rate of 45 percent of the debts. Al-Rawdan pointed out that the Kuwaiti economy had been greatly affected by the unjust Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait.

The Kuwaiti minister said that Kuwait had been able to overcome the bottleneck, particularly at the economic level, pointing out that the Kuwaiti economy was vast. However, all the economic sectors, led by the the oil installations, were crippled. However, we were able to overcome the ordeal in record time.

Foreign Minister's View of PLO-Israel Pact Lauded

LD3009134293 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0755 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Kuwait, 30 Sep (KUNA)—The newspaper AL-RA'Y today praised the stand announced by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on the outcome of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

In its editorial entitled "The Arabs' Foreign Minister" the paper said that when Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad stressed support not for Arafat's organization but instead for the Palestinian intifadah, he was, as usual, the chief Arab diplomat, rectifying the Arab decision and determining the party that deserves support.

The paper said that by declaring this position, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad was Kuwait's conscience and the Arabs' mouthpiece [lisan], which is fettered by fear, and the will of the Arab nation, which is burdened by the hegemony and arbitrariness of U.S. decisions. The United States wants us to pay the killer for his crime and to award the traitor for his treason and to be partners with 'Arafat in the deal of lowliness and disgrace.

Saudi Arabia

Foreign Minister Meets Christopher, Discusses Israel

LD0110081793 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Excerpts] [Announcer] [passage omitted] His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, our foreign minister, met yesterday evening with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Bilateral relations and issues on the UN General Assembly agenda were discussed. [passage omitted]

Later, our foreign minister was asked to comment on his meeting.

[Begin recording] [Al-Faysal] The main issue was to firmly entrench the bases of peace. We have supported

peace efforts from the outset, and we will continue to support these efforts. I believe it is the duty of all sides to contribute to the implementation of what has been agreed between the Palestinians and Israel.

[Correspondent] Can we talk about an Israeli-Palestinian peace without talking about an Israeli peace with the other sides—Arab countries? Israel still occupies a large area of land, such as the Golan and southern Lebanon.

[Al-Faysal] Naturally, the peace we are seeking is a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East region. The Arab stance has always been to assert that the core of the conflict was the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Now that there is the beginning of an opening, it is bound to have repercussions on other peace processes. This is what we are calling and hoping for.

[Correspondent, in English] Will Saudi Arabia lead the other Arab countries in trying to end the boycott against Israel? [end recording]

[Announcer] Regarding the Kingdom's participation with other countries in an attempt to lift the boycott against Israel, the foreign minister said: The Arab countries are cooperating collectively in that domain. Let me say that the vast majority are doing everything they can. The boycott question was one of the issues discussed by the Arab League. I believe that, in time, everyone will try to reconsider this issue.

Paper Criticizes U.S. Attempt To 'Acquit' Israel

PM3009110093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 29 Sep 93 p 11

[Bilal al-Hasan article: "Attempt To Abolish History"]

[Text] The United States has rapidly and decisively moved from the stage of defending the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, to the stage of changing all political realities, to the stage of consolidating Israel's entry to the Middle East region and its Arab and non-Arab markets. It has left the task of defending and promoting the agreement to the media services, devoting all its diplomatic energies to working to achieve more serious tasks.

U.S. diplomacy's first task now is to work for the lifting of the Arab boycott of Israel, on the grounds that it is a practical start for accepting Israel as one of the region's states and a practical translation of the Arab support of the agreement. In its endeavors to impose this, the United States is not asking whether it is in the Arabs' interests, or what Israel is going to offer in return for revoking the decision. It is thinking only of Israel's interests, on the grounds that they are U.S. interests. While the correspondence between Israeli and U.S. interests is something well known, what really draws attention is the Arab timidity in replying to the U.S. pressure. The time has come for this timidity to turn into a loud voice demanding that Arab interests be discussed in any agreement before any discussion of Israeli interests.

U.S. diplomacy's second task began a few days ago with the beginning of the UN General Assembly's proceedings and through a persevering and declared orientation to reexamine all the UN resolutions on the Palestinian issue. Washington is seeking to annul all these resolutions in the same manner the resolution equating Zionism with racist was annulled.

The resolutions adopted in the United Nations include many issues, among them condemnation of Jerusalem's annexation, the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, the Palestinian people's right to establish an independent state, and condemnation of the policies of expulsion, evacuation, demolition of homes, and changing the demographic character of the territories occupied in 1967. Any attempt to touch any of these resolutions will not be an innocent process designed—as the Americans say—to abolish the old language of hostility and come into line with the language of understanding and peace consolidated by the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. They seek to clear Israel completely, clear its conscience, clear the usurpation and occupation, clear all the policies of repression and persecution practiced against the Palestinian people over 45 years. This acquittal is required in order to include Israel in the region and regard it as one of its states, with the same rights and duties, in order to boost the U.S. economic power.

This is maybe why the Israelis insisted on putting the phrase "historic reconciliation" in the preamble of the agreement they reached secretly with President Yasir 'Arafat. They, together with the Americans, are now demanding that the phrase "historic reconciliation" be translated into a reality, that is, a historic reconciliation that clears Israel but forgets about all the Palestinian people's rights, including the right of return for 3 million refugees.

Al-Sahhaf Meets Chinese Minister in New York

JN3009210593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2020 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] New York, United Nations, 30 Sep (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf met in New York tonight with Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen. An INA correspondent in New York said that the Chinese minister noted, during the meeting, China's concern for lifting the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq and its people.

The foreign minister then met with Vladislav Jovanovic, foreign minister of Federal Yugoslavia, and discussed with him some issues of common concern.

Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf also met with Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock and discussed with him issues related to the United Nations, in addition to relations between Iraq and Austria.

The foreign minister is expected to meet later with Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Gonzalez.

Meets With Cuban Counterpart

JN0110101393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0944 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Text] New York, 1 Oct (INA)—Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf has discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations with his Cuban counterpart, Roberto Robaina Gonzalez. INA's New York correspondent reports the two ministers met last night and exchanged viewpoints in order to coordinate the two countries position on lifting the blockade imposed on the two peoples. They also discussed some of the topics on the agenda of the UN General Assembly's 48th session and agreed to strengthen coordination between the Arab group and the Latin America group at the United Nations.

Regime Said To Seek 'Price' for Accord Support

NC3009151993 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] According to Palestinian and Iraqi opposition sources, the government of tyrant Saddam Husayn has officially notified the PLO of its support for the Gaza-Jericho agreement. But Saddam's government does not want to make this public, for tactical political considerations.

Palestinian sources say that Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, focused on the issue when he visited Baghdad following the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. Qaddumi received assurances from Iraqi regime officials that they do not oppose the agreement, but they cannot publicize their position because of the isolation they have suffered since the invasion of Kuwait.

According to Palestinian sources in Tunisia, Saddam Husayn's regime seeks to obtain a political price for approving the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. According to the sources, who wish to remain anonymous, the ostracized tyrant's regime wants the PLO to use its improved ties with the United States and EC countries to advocate an end to Iraq's political isolation and the economic sanctions against it.

The sources point out that one indicator of Saddam Husayn's position is his refusal to support the views of the Palestinian organizations opposing the agreement [words indistinct] diplomatically that Baghdad supports the decision the PLO makes and is in no position to oppose that agreement, although it does not want to reveal its stance openly.

Paper Assails Arab Support for PLO-Israel Accord

JN2909130593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Sep (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, has affirmed that the Zionist entity's right to exist, which many Arab officials have attempted to promote, will definitely remain odd and unacceptable to the entire Arab people.

In an article published today, the paper adds that the Egyptian regime's drive to normalize ties with the Zionist entity over the past 14 years is the best proof of this.

The paper notes the frenzied efforts made by the Hafar al-Batin alliance to facilitate the Zionist penetration and domination of the region for many years, which will come through the creation of military bases as well as economic pillars and facilities.

The paper indicates that the Zionist entity is not after recognition per se, but actually after the commitments such a recognition will elicit, because such commitments will promote Zionist interests in the foreseeable future, and in the long run, as well.

AL-THAWRAH notes that the recognition idea was previously promoted by some Arab rulers. The extension of official recognition to the Zionist entity, the paper contends, has provided all agents in the Arab arena with the opportunity to reveal their true colors, which endorse and uphold such an approach. The Gaza-Jericho accord and its annexes have enormously helped these agents. Thanks to this help, the paper maintains, this accord will serve as a bridgehead for the Zionists to penetrate the region.

The paper affirms that this cheap Arab eagerness, which we have been witnessing, has been manifested in a string of developments. The first of these developments was the final statement issued by the Arab League, which endorsed this accord and discussed the lifting of the

boycott of the Zionist entity at a time when the unfair embargo clamped on the Iraqi people and children is still in force. Other manifestations of this eagerness are: The monstrous drive launched by the Egyptian regime to revoke the Arab boycott of Israel, the insolent advertisements promoted by the al-Sabah family in Kuwait, urging Kuwaitis to visit Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, as well as the endorsement by the Syrian trade minister of economic ties with the Zionist entity, the paper contends.

AL-THAWRAH says: Opening Arab markets for Zionists, promoting their right to exist, and holding talks with them in more than one "Arab" capital are not only manifestations of a servile response to Washington's terms and dictates. Indeed, all this betrays an absolute mortgage of these capitals' will, and reflects a true desire on their part to engage in such endeavors. Since they lined up with the enemy in Hafar al-Batin, these capitals have shown a subservient and treasonous conduct.

Al-Asad's 'Task' Said Set by Rabin

JN0110105793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1005 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Text] Baghdad, 1 Oct (INA)—The AL-THAWRAH newspaper has asserted that Hafiz al-Asad's new task, as determined by Rabin, is to publicly accept the Gaza-Jericho agreement and play the role of the tough policeman charged with suppressing Palestinian voices.

In an article today, the paper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: Hafiz al-Asad must adjust his presence in Lebanon to fit the needs of peace in the Galilee. The Golan Heights must wait as the priority now goes to Gaza and Jericho. Priorities of Tel Aviv and Washington annuls or postpones the priority of others, especially those who have been players in the U.S. team in the region for the past 20 years.

The paper explains that the mountain and camps wars [in Lebanon], the Tripoli massacre, the alliance with Iran, and fighting against Iraq from the Hafar al-Batin trenches, as well as all other forms of conspiracy, subversion, and division of Lebanese, Palestinian, and Arab ranks—all this weakened the Arabs and served the enemy. All this also weakened Hafiz al-Asad and made him powerless with no cards to play against Rabin.

The paper says: Hafiz al-Asad now has no option but to execute Rabin's orders and wait until he offers him parts of the Golan Heights under conditions Rabin will set.

Opposition Heads Meet, Discuss Activating Forces

NC3009182293 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1705 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] This morning, brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, received Abu-Amal, representing Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim [leader of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, SAIRI]. The two discussed the political situation in Kurdistan, Iraq, and the region. They also discussed economic conditions in Iraq.

Talabani and Abu-Amal discussed developing and activating the opposition forces and the steps that must be taken at this stage. The meeting lasted an hour.

Ramadan, al-Basrah Officials Discuss Projects

JN3009130193 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, vice president and official in charge of developing the Safwan Subdistrict, has discussed, during a meeting with al-Basrah Governor Latif Mahal Humud, the progress made in the implementation of development projects currently under way in the Governorate.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said that the best and greatest accomplishments are those completed under the current difficult circumstances, not only because they were accomplished in a short time and with reduced costs, thus making financial savings, but also because they have established standing operating procedures and provided us with excellent accumulated expertise.

Ramadan was briefed on the accomplishment rates pertaining to the projects currently under way in the subdistrict.

In a separate development, the vice president has met with the members of the committee in charge of development projects in the Safwan Subdistrict, as well as the chiefs of the firms carrying out these projects.

During the meeting, which was attended by al-Basrah Governor Latif Mahal Humud, Taha Yasin Ramadan listened to a detailed explanation of the progress made in the implementation of the projects currently under way in the subdistrict, and also of the problems and obstacles hindering work. He called for using alternative materials, and urged expedited efforts to accomplish projects in densely populated areas.

IDF To Continue Hunting Fugitives Despite PLO Protests

TA0110054693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Text] The chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq, said the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will continue hunting down the killers of Israelis and Palestinians, despite protests from the PLO. I think it's only right and better for both communities that such killers be behind bars, he told reporter Alan Ben-'Ami. Gen. Baraq made the comments following the capture of a Fatah Black Panther gang held responsible for a string of murders and attacks on Israelis and Palestinians:

[Begin recording] [Baraq] It's a major success. We feel that these people are responsible for some of the most murderous attacks on both Israelis and Palestinians, and they should be behind bars in prison.

[Ben-'Ami] There are still a number of wanted men in the Janin area and elsewhere in the territories. Will the IDF continue to hunt them down?

[Baraq] There are still some, and we are still concentrating on trying to arrest those who are directly and personally responsible for murderous attacks on either Jews or Palestinians.

[Ben-'Ami] And how do you respond to the Palestinian complaint, criticism, that a peace agreement has been signed, 'Arafat has called on his men to lay down their arms, and the IDF is continuing to hunt them down? You don't feel there should be some sort of amnesty here?

[Baraq] If during the negotiations process some conclusions or results will be reached in regard to these people, we will consider whatever results will be achieved. But as of now, and in regard to those people who are directly and personally involved in attacks on Israelis and Palestinians, we are still under the same policy of arresting them. [end recording]

The chief of staff was interviewed during a visit to the traditional Sukkoth Holiday exhibition of the IDF Armored Corps.

[Writing on page 3 of Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 1 October, Yoram Binur reports that "sources close to the Black Panther are convinced that the capture of the wanted men, which came off without casualties and without the use of violence either by the IDF or Black Panther personnel, is the result of a clandestine deal between Fatah and the Israeli authorities. According to the deal, the Black Panther members were to surrender in what was to appear a sophisticated IDF operation, receive fair treatment, be detained, and then be released and handed over to the autonomy authorities after a reasonable period.

["Palestinian sources believe Yasir 'Arafat was also party to the deal. They asserted that despite 'Arafat's support for the Black Panther, he prefers that the organization be unable to operate in the near future. Its considerable strength and public influence in the Janin area are liable to make problems for the PLO chief when autonomy is first implemented in the territories."]

Strike Called To Protest Arrests

TA3009123193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Most of the Palestinians in Judaea and Samaria are participating in a commercial protest strike today in the wake of the detention of Black Panther commander Ahmad 'Awwad al-Hikmal and some members of his squad. It is the first strike by Fatah supporters since the agreement with the PLO was signed over two weeks ago. Ahmad Irshad, a Fatah leader in the territories, said the inhabitants were shocked by the arrest of al-Hikmal and his friends because Fatah had declared a cease-fire. Last night it was reported that the detained men will be tried for attacks against the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the murder of Palestinians.

Yasir 'Arafat reiterated his call to Prime Minister Rabin to free Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader in the territories. 'Arafat made his request to the MAPAM [United Workers Party] delegation, which met with him in Tunis.

Fatah Hawks Begin Police Operations in Gaza, Rafah

TA0110110493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Oct 93 p A10

[Report by military affairs correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpt] The Fatah Hawks squads in the Gaza Strip and Rafah have published a leaflet announcing that in view of the agreement signed by the PLO and Israel and in accordance with Yasir 'Arafat's order, they are discontinuing all activities against IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops and beginning to operate as the Palestinian police, safeguarding the local residents' security.

Yesterday, for the first time, a Fatah Hawks squad captured three Rafah residents accused of theft. They were brought by the squad members to a central spot in the Rafah refugee camp and shot in the legs after a brief trial, with thousands of people looking on.

The squad members informed the residents that the three men merited public punishment because of their criminal deeds. It was learned that the three locals who were shot in the legs had broken into private homes and stolen 20,000 dinars from a Rafah merchant.

A senior Army source said that in his opinion, Fatah Hawks squads will conduct police duties even before the IDF withdraws from Gaza and other areas.

A series of incidents were reported in the territories. In Jerusalem, a 17-year-old Arab girl tried to stab a soldier

with a knife. She was captured by the police as she was approaching a soldier standing guard at the Western Wall. [passage omitted]

Shohat Asks EC for Status Upgrade, Meets Bentsen

TA3009154593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Finance Minister Avraham Shohat has asked the EC to upgrade Israel's status in it. He submitted a request to this effect to the Belgian foreign minister during a meeting last night in Washington. The EC Commission announced last night that it had recommended to the EC foreign ministers to raise the level of relations with Israel and enable it to participate in research and development programs of the European Community.

Finance Minister Shohat also conferred with U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen. Among other things, he told his U.S. counterpart that in the course of the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] pullout from Gaza and Jericho there could be a problem with the financing of regular services, which are currently paid by the Civil Administration.

Bentsen noted that he and his colleagues would try to make sure that real decisions are adopted on the implementation of programs during the meeting in Washington of the countries willing to donate aid to the Palestinians. He added that Washington would bring pressure to bear on the Arabs to invest in the Palestinian autonomy.

Peres Regrets Cypriot Release of Palestinian 'Terrorists'

TA3009121093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has expressed regret over the Cypriot president's pardon of three terrorists who murdered three Israelis on a yacht on Yom Kippur eight years ago. The three were pardoned and released yesterday, Cypriot independence day. Peres said the pardon does not serve the interests of peace. He said a strong message must be sent to all parties in the Middle East conflict that terrorism is unacceptable.

Peres To Meet Kohl; Beilin To Visit South America

TA3009182693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Peres will visit Bonn next week. German sources say he will hold talks with Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin will travel later this week to South America on an official visit. Beilin will meet with leaders of Brazil and Argentina to discuss economic and political matters. The deputy foreign minister will ask the two South American countries, who have good relations with the Arab states, to help end the economic boycott against Israel and free Israel's missing soldiers. Beilin will also meet with Israeli ambassadors in South America to brief them on the agreement between Israel and the PLO.

Beilin Interviewed on Foreign Policy Issues

TA3009122993 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR [SUKKOTH supplement] in Hebrew 29 Sep 93 pp 9, 10

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Pe'erli Shahar; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Shahar] Concern is being voiced among what are called "Jerusalem political sources" about a confrontation with the PLO leadership, which has said that they are about to go to Gaza and Jericho. Rabin is talking about six to seven months before the first agreement is signed on the arrangement.

[Beilin] The talk by the PLO leadership is being done as part of their desire to gain support in the Palestinian camp. It is clear to them that they cannot reach Jericho tomorrow, nobody is talking about that or taking it seriously. The issue of whether experts will arrive in the region to run Gaza and Jericho or join the Gaza and Jericho police forces will be discussed between us within the negotiating framework. Only after the negotiations are put into practice, in other words, after the Army withdraws from the centers of the towns and is redeployed, only then will it be possible to decide whether the arrival of outside elements can be permitted, and if they are, which outside elements will they be.

[Shahar] In other words, it is not definite that we will give 'Arafat an entry visa.

[Beilin] It is not definite.

[Shahar] Since the PLO is weak, the possibility was raised that 'Arafat might be assassinated. Rabin said that if 'Arafat is murdered we cannot do anything about it, but the arrangement will be upheld, as was the case with Egypt. There are, however, those who present the agreement signed with Lebanon as an example. In other words, to what extent can the accord be implemented if 'Arafat is assassinated?

[Beilin] The agreement with Lebanon was not signed with a president who was murdered, and does not exemplify anything. It is an example of the folly of a Likud government which thought it had signed an agreement while, actually, it had not. It was no accident that we (Labor) abstained in the 17 May 1973 Knesset vote. We did so because we understood that an agreement was signed with a Syrian puppet government in Lebanon, which was incapable of implementing it. That is why it was revoked a very short time later. We are now talking about an agreement with a body which can definitely implement it. The fact is that the PLO has not been

involved in terrorism from the moment the agreement was signed. This shows that 'Arafat has full control at least of the PLO. Nobody can sign a contract or agreement on condition that the other side does not get hurt. There is no such thing. Life is not an insurance policy, and it must be taken into account that such things can happen, but that cannot prevent us from making peace. It would be simply crazy not to draw up agreements with another party since he might die or be murdered. Nobody can make assurances either for himself or the other side. It is a fact that when something like that occurred in Egypt there was continuity. I hope it will not happen in the future, but in any case, the assumption is that there is continuity on the other side. And if, God forbid, there is no continuity and the agreement is violated, then if it is violated by one side, it will not be honored by the other.

[Shahar] Is there a possibility that we will safeguard 'Arafat?

[Beilin] I do not think 'Arafat is interested in Israel safeguarding him, but it is completely unrealistic.

[Shahar] Three months ago, we met at the president's residence. I asked you at the time whether there were direct negotiations between us, beyond the Washington talks. You gave me an ambiguous, unrealistic reply. How do you manage to do that with a poker face?

[Beilin] I do not think I hid the facts. I never said there are no contacts with the Palestinians. I said that on the contrary, unlike Syria, with which we do not have any informal contacts, with the Palestinians and with the Jordanians there are informal contacts which are partially conducted during the multilateral talks and partially under different circumstances, and that we meet all the time with Palestinians in all sorts of frameworks. I, of course, did not refer to anything specific because that would have been suicide.

[Shahar] When you talk about unofficial or secret contacts with Jordan, can that lead to the move being undermined?

[Beilin] We meet with the Jordanians in all the multilateral committees and in between committee meetings, called "intersessional" meetings. There are a lot of meetings, an entire industry of meetings. We meet with all sorts of Jordanians. That is different than with the Syrians, with whom something like that is not taking place. There has always been a difference between Jordan and the Palestinians on the one hand, and Syria and Lebanon on the other. For instance, the head of the Jordanian delegation to the Washington talks, who was appointed after al-Majali was made Jordanian prime minister, has in the meantime been appointed Jordan's ambassador to Washington. We meet him in the bilaterals and multilaterals; we meet and exchange views. He is not cold and unapproachable, somebody who only talks with us across the negotiating table. The talks take place. I am not referring to some secret track with Jordan, because among other reasons, there is no need. [passage omitted]

[Shahar] Let us move to the Syrian track. There were reports about agreements with the Syrians. I would like to ask this question in a way that might make it hard for you to try to get out of answering. Are there any understandings rather than initialed or signed agreements? Is there an understanding with the Syrians on a possible settlement?

[Beilin] Regrettably, no. I would very much have liked something like that to exist.

[Shahar] So what, for instance, is 'Amr Musa's optimism based on?

[Beilin] I do not know, I wonder about it. I fear it is more wishful thinking than reality.

[Shahar] There have been reports that there are understandings and arrangements but that the authorities are afraid that the public is not yet prepared for decisions to be made along these lines.

[Beilin] That is wrong. By the way, I believe that public opinion is ready. I think that was shown on the PLO issue. I think there is nothing harder for any Israeli politician than the agreement with the PLO and shaking hands with 'Arafat. Everything that will happen now will be easier than that difficult moment, the agreement with the PLO. [passage omitted]

[Shahar] To return to Syria, how can a breakthrough be made?

[Beilin] I think it will be very hard to make a breakthrough within the existing framework. In other words, I believe that another round of the talks with the Syrians cannot be much more productive than the previous one. One of two things has to happen: Either a meeting between leaders, in which both sides have sufficient authority to reach binding decisions, or a continuation of U.S. shuttle diplomacy between Damascus and Jerusalem. We have been stuck since 20 October 1992, almost a year under our new government, over the same issue: Who will be the first to declare its readiness—one side for withdrawal and the other for peace. It is the famous Clause 5 on which we have been stuck and cannot move forward. I believe that only a third party can try and extract from each side how far it is willing to go, to mediate. If there is a U.S. decision to invest special efforts in this, it will involve much more intensive shuttle diplomacy than has been the case so far.

[Shahar] The reasonable possibility that al-Asad will try to sabotage the agreement with the Palestinians, if progress is not made with him, has been raised. So how concerned are we to get things moving?

[Beilin] We do not have to court him, we have taken many steps and expressed an unprecedented readiness to act. I agree that there is no longer a need to knock on his

door all the time and beg him to make peace with us. I think that what we did with the Palestinians came as a surprise to him. He believed he could decide the pace, which was proved wrong. I believe that in the final analysis, perhaps not at the initial stage, the agreement with the Palestinians will spur an agreement with the Syrians. Israel had an interest in reaching peace with the Palestinians, and people like myself always believed that they would be the first to reach an agreement with us because the Palestinians—who are perhaps the weakest element—are the only ones who can permit themselves to face us while all the others are waiting for them. While the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is the heart of the conflict, the Syrian problem, from our viewpoint, is the only strategic problem, taking into account our other neighbors. Solving the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts neutralize to a large extent the overall Israeli-Arab conflict. It is therefore important for us, of course, to reach peace with Syria. It is obvious that there will not be a peace with the Golan Heights, but a peace which involves a compromise that will not be easy for us. Still, I believe that we have to do it—not at any price—and that the Syrians have a very deep interest in not remaining behind and in making peace with us. In my view, American involvement within the shuttle diplomacy framework, which will continue the efforts begun by Christopher in his last visit but at a much more intensive pace, can be fruitful.

[Shahar] Immediately after the agreement on principles with the Palestinians, you addressed Labor's Mashov circle and referred to the possibility of dividing Jerusalem into boroughs and transferring one of them to Palestinian self-rule—which is not the first time it has been raised. Are you not rushing ahead too fast? It arouses criticism, more due to the speed than the idea itself.

[Beilin] I do not think I am rushing ahead too quickly. I think we are moving toward a revolutionary upheaval in the Middle East, which many of us, including those who support and aspire to it, have not yet become used to. Within months, not years, we can reach a comprehensive peace accord in the Middle East. Within the framework of that agreement, Jerusalem will, of course, be an issue to be put on the negotiating table with the Palestinians—to which Israel has agreed. We will not be able to compromise on Jerusalem's sovereignty and the city remaining our unified capital. The Palestinians are aware of that. I think that in the final analysis, they will have to face the difficult dilemma of giving up any claim to sovereignty over Jerusalem and the demand that Israel return to the precise pre-1967 borders in return for receiving many of their demands within the framework of a federative or confederative framework with Jordan. They will have to decide if they are ready for such an arrangement—which is not precisely what they had hoped for—or wait for a more moderate government in Israel which will agree to far-reaching concessions. Such a government will not be set up within the near future. I hope that when faced with that dilemma, they will decide to take what is being offered and give up the dream of sovereignty over Jerusalem. Nevertheless, from our point of view, anything that does not infringe on that formula—Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel and under Israeli sovereignty, on which we all agree—and that gives the Palestinians in Jerusalem elements of self-rule, is good both for us and for them. I referred to a Teddy Kollek article in FOREIGN AFFAIRS in 1998, which is very, very acceptable to me. He also takes into account Jerusalem's Arab population and does not cede Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem. I was not surprised that the issue has been exploited by the Likud. I was merely disappointed that my colleagues did not delve deeper into the idea before criticizing me. We support Kollek's idea, which in my view, is an excellent idea, was relevant at the time, and is still relevant.

[Shahar] You mentioned a confederation or Jordanian-Palestinian federation. They are talking about a tripartite federation, in other words, Israel, the Palestinians, and Jordan. Does such an arrangement seem possible to you?

[Beilin] I think these are two different things. To me, a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation has a single political framework. I would not like to have a single political framework with the Palestinians. A tripartite confederation is in fact a common market. I would prefer a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation that has an economic arrangement with Israel, but not a tripartite confederation, because one of two things would occur: Either there would be three separate entities, and I am not excited about that, or it would mean one unified entity, about which I am even less enthusiastic because Israel would be a minority in such a setup.

[Shahar] If you are asked to forecast how long it would be before there is a comprehensive peace, despite all the difficulties along the way, do you think that by the end of 1994 we will really be able to end the era of wars?

[Beilin] I think that within a very short time, months, we can reach a comprehensive agreement with Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. Under the agreement with the Palestinians, it will be five years from the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord. We can therefore talk about a full and comprehensive peace only in five years. But since the detailed agreement with the Palestinians will be achieved, I hope, within two months, I believe that even by the end of 1993 we can reach very big achievements. I think it is safe to say that when we complete this term, we will be able to say that we did not waste any opportunities or moments and that we did the best we could to reach a political settlement that combines peace and security, as we promised our electorate, and primarily ourselves.

[Shahar] In reference to the Morocco issue. When we reached Morocco, both Peres and Rabin said that Hassan is very interested in reaching an understanding with 'Arafat on certain issues.

[Beilin] The Moroccan king has very good ties with both 'Arafat and us. That is no secret. I am sure that in his many meetings with 'Arafat he was one of the factors which tried, and succeeded, to convince him to reach agreement with us. I suppose that 'Arafat's greatest difficulty was changing the Palestinian National Covenant. That is something he did not agree to in the past, and the fact that he has now agreed to it derives from the difficulties in which he has been immersed lately and the influence of people like the Moroccan king, who convinced him to reach that historic agreement with Israel. [passage omitted]

Netanyahu on Peace Accords, Knesset Vote

TA3009165893 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (HAG HASUKOT supplement) in Hebrew 29 Sep 93 pp 8, 9

[Interview with Likud chairman Binyamin Netanyahu by Nehama Dowek; place and date not given]

[Text] [Dowek] Sir, where did you watch the signing ceremony of the peace agreement with the Palestinians?

[Netanyahu] At home, with my wife.

[Dowek] At any point during the ceremony, did you not feel as if there had been a mistake and that it should actually have been you on the South Lawn beside President Clinton?

[Netanyahu] Not even for a minute.

[Dowek] Such a feeling would have been human.

[Netanyahu] I have stood on the White House's lawn many times and I am not awed by pomp and ceremony. I thought to myself that, unfortunately, this was definitely a historical turning point and that the people standing there would go down in history. At the same time, I thought they would not go down in history the way they would like to. It was beneath the State of Israel's honor to attend a ceremony in which, with their own signature, they gave away to foreign sovereignty land that had been promised to the Jews by the British mandate government. Then they went to meetings to raise billions for that very same Palestinian state, instead of investing their efforts on bringing thousands of Jews to Israel.

[Dowek] Your colleagues in the Likud Knesset faction, particularly those who abstained in the vote, hold it against you that you simply do not see that the people are not with you.

[Netanyahu] I, too, meet people and my feelings are different. The entire nation wants to believe that there will be peace, and I am no different. This wish peaked in the signing ceremony on the agreement. There was a wave of ecstasy. But now, many people are beginning to think that maybe the matter should be reconsidered and they should ask clarifications about what lies down the road.

[Dowek] You think the people are with you, but the fact remains that two of your colleagues abstained in the vote, while two others, 'Ovadya 'Eli and Me'ir Shitrit, met with the prime minister. Shitrit even met him without your knowledge, and only told you about it afterward. Is that all right?

[Netanyahu] 'Ovadya 'Eli told me he had been invited, and asked me what to do. I explained to him the points on which he should ask clarifications, and that is what he did. Indeed, in Shitrit's case I learned about it after the fact. The proper thing would have been to brief the party chairman before calling on the prime minister.

[Dowek] Do Ari'el Sharon's remarks and the three abstentions not show that your leadership has collapsed?

[Netanyahu] In every big party, Knesset members [MK] make private pronouncements. It is not a monolithic system. Their statements are not binding on the party. The same applies to MK Mikha'el Eytan's proposal about a unity government. It is a private initiative, and I do not think there is a basis for a unity government unless the five principles in the Likud's draft resolution summing up the Knesset political debate are embraced. The fact that the government refuses to do that shows that there are disagreement already at this initial stage.

[Dowek] It may also be that the people want unity rather than dissent at this time.

[Netanyahu] If the prime minister changes his approach, if the government moves from Meretz' extreme to the center, he will find us willing partners, at least to talk. If they advocate handing over the land, there is no practical basis for a partnership.

[Dowek] Ge'ula Kohen, who both founded the Tehiya party and brought about its downfall, walked out of this room just as I came in. Could it not be, as some argue, that you are leading the Likud to the right and jeopardizing its existence?

[Netanyahu] There is no such question. You mentioned Ge'ula, and I would like to point out that there have been many left-wing people in this room, including senior military men who are afraid to come forward and who are apprehensive about the agreement. As for leaning rightward, the confusion is due to the fact that the Likud sided with the opposition to prevent the agreement, which does not mean that we see eye to eye with the other parties.

We must tackle the new political reality created in the wake of the agreement, its signing, and the Knesset debate. Up until the time of the Knesset debate the Likud's first mission had been to consolidate and broaden the opposition. Now that the debate is over, we must present a clear political alternative.

[Dowek] So, what is your alternative plan?

[Netanyahu] We have already presented it. In the draft resolution, formulated together with my colleagues and

other opposition factions, we raised five fundamental points upon which the government must insist: Meticulously upholding security while the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] retains its right to operate everywhere; upholding the unity of Jerusalem; strengthening the Jewish settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, which are the guarantee against the establishment of a Palestinian state; absolute opposition to any pronouncement about the right of return; and total opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

[Dowek] I am not yet clear about your alternative to the peace agreement.

[Netanyahu] I say they are leading us straight to a Palestinian state, but they claim otherwise and the prime minister declares that this is not his policy. In that case, they must insist on the aforementioned five points. We will summon the Likud Central Committee on 19 October to present a comprehensive alternative plan. I will not go into its details now.

[Dowek] Could it be because such a plan does not yet exist?

[Netanyahu] There is a plan. I will not elaborate on it.

[Dowek] On a few occasions you have accused the prime minister of having been led to a move he was not reconciled with.

[Netanyahu] The prime minister did not strike me as leading the move with too much enthusiasm. Maybe he knows the truth. What is frightening about Labor is the unanimity of views, which is almost absolute among members of its Knesset faction and the party's central committee, except for individuals, such as Shlomo Hilel, who gave vent to their anxieties over the agreement. They act like a herd of sheep, rushing forward without thinking and without voicing any reservations.

[Dowek] You accuse Labor of ideological collectivity, but you demanded that your colleagues vote unanimously against the agreement; you invoked party discipline. How do you square the two?

[Netanyahu] I did not ban freedom of speech in the faction. I allowed everybody to voice their views, and I demanded that every MK be allowed to speak from the Knesset podium. Indeed, an open debate took place. But there is a difference between arguing one's case and taking action contravening what the faction agreed upon.

[Dowek] Your colleagues claim that there was no in-depth discussion.

[Netanyahu] There was agreement, albeit not universal, that we must oppose the agreement. Debates were held in the faction, in its executive, and with the heads of the opposition. We centered our efforts on paring down the 70-MK majority the prime minister was striving for to the slim 61-MK majority the government got. Now that the agreement has become a fact we should look ahead and consolidate ways to steer a proper alternative. Incidentally, here is where a gap could emerge between us and the other opposition parties.

The Likud has not radicalized its position on any issue. It consolidated a broad opposition. The impression of a move rightward may have been created by the fact that the government moved leftward and embraced Meretz' positions. The Likud is being accused of not having a political program, whereas we have a clear political platform. It may need to be freshened up and revised in view of the circumstances.

[Dowek] Including the clause in its constitution whereby Israel's law should be enforced in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza?

[Netanyahu] The Likud's platform must be updated in view of the new reality. We must look beyond the horizon, while consolidating an alternative in view of the reality in the field.

[Dowek] Would that include canceling the clause speaking of annexation?

[Netanyahu] I am not canceling any clause. The question is what will be the fate of the Arab population, and who will rule there, them or us. Labor is galloping to the 1967 borders, engulfed by a thick cloud of dust. I will present an alternative compatible with the aspirations and desires of the entire Israeli public.

[Dowek] Polls show that a large number of Israelis support the agreement.

[Netanyahu] The sector that supports the agreements is increasingly shrinking. The majority that supports the agreement is, in the same breath, opposed to a Palestinian state. It is willing to accept a pullout from Gaza and Jericho. But, as time goes by, people realize that none too soon we would be withdrawing from the entire area and handing it over to the PLO. To that, in my opinion, the people do not agree.

[Dowek] Nevertheless, three of your colleagues abstained in the vote.

[Netanyahu] It is not the first time that such a thing has happened in the Likud. However, I would like to remind you that 800,000 citizens who voted for the Likud in the last elections gave their mandate to a clear political position. One must also bear in mind that the three MK's did not support the agreement but abstained. At the same time, I believe it is inconceivable that on such a critical question they should not be faithful to the party's positions.

[Dowek] Do you support MK Tzahi Hanegbi's request to the Likud's disciplinary tribunal to oust them?

[Netanyahu] I believe what they did was serious. However, I am not in favor of ousting them from the party. It is clear to me that our differences are far more negligible than our agreements.

[Dowek] How do you deal with the challenge to your leadership?

[Netanyahu] What is new about that? The leadership of the late Menahem Begin was challenged, and so was that of Yitzhaq Shamir, may he live long. Such calls occur in all democratic parties, although I must point out that in the Likud such challenges are occasionally extreme. Wherever they may be, leaderships are constantly challenged. It is something chronic.

[Dowek] Is it a disease?

[Netanyahu] It is definitely unhealthy, but the vast majority of the Likud members realize that it is way beyond proportions. These wars brought down the Likud, and they are a foolproof recipe for falling on one's face. The vast majority wants to see something altogether entirely different. I am neither perturbed nor complacent about it. The situation is simple: If they want to commit suicide, let them go on with the internal struggles. I believe in the party's will to live. I get reassurances from key Likud MK's and functionaries in the field. I am being asked to lead the party the way I believe in, which is the only way.

[Dowek] Is Rabin totally wrong?

[Netanyahu] It happens in the life of nations that leaders are wrong and governments commit gross mistakes. I am sure that Rabin is a patriot, and you will never find me saying otherwise. I only think that in this case there was panic to get peace at any price, and the government felt stuck in a maze. My question is: What was the rush? Why did they strike an agreement in secret and in haste? Running to the White House was an act of irresponsibility.

[Dowek] You are calling for elections now, but some argue that if Labor were to announce tomorrow morning that it is willing to hold elections on 2 November together with the municipal elections you would oppose it.

[Netanyahu] I am in favor of elections, but I would insist on abiding by the law, which calls for a period of three months between the time elections are announced and the date they are held to give the sides enough time to explain their positions.

[Dowek] Why are you opposed to a referendum on the agreement?

[Netanyahu] Elections are the best referendum.

Crown Prince Arrives in U.S., Meets Congressmen

JN3009190693 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan has arrived in Washington, starting an official visit of several days to the United States. During the visit, his highness will meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. His Highness will also deliver Jordan's speech at the current session of the UN General Assembly.

Immediately after his arrival in Washington, his highness met with members of the Jordanian delegation to the World Bank's meetings on the Middle East, which are currently being held in Washington. His highness was briefed by the delegation on the meetings and the Jordanian delegation's participation in them, especially concerning the Jordanian viewpoint, which calls for regional development based on a comprehensive and accurate regional general perspective. This view also calls for an examination of all structural problems facing the Jordanian economy as a result of its shouldering special burdens due to the circumstances that have prevailed in the region for the past few decades.

His highness also met with the chairman and members of the Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee. His highness reviewed the Jordanian view of the Middle East peace process and relations between the United States and Jordan.

Chief Editor Charged With Slandering Court

JN3009115393 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 30 Sep-1 Oct 93 p 10

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Sana' 'Atiyah]

[Excerpt] Amman—State Security Court prosecutor Major Muhannad Hijazi Wednesday [29 September] charged the chief editor of Al-Ahali weekly newspaper for "slandering" the court before referring his case and the case of a detained Al-Ahali reporter to the civil court.

Editor Jamil al-Nimri was summoned to the State Security Court to be questioned by Maj. Hijazi on the case of Al-Ahali reporter Ramadan Rawashidah, who has been charged with slandering the court during his coverage of a trial of an assassination plot against His Majesty King Husayn.

Mr. al-Nimri, who was not detained, and Maj. Hijazi told the Jordan Times that before the editor was questioned in the presence of two lawyers, he was charged with the same four counts as his colleague: "Slandering the State Security Court, publishing news, information and criticism of the trial which affects the judges, witnesses and public opinion, and publishing the transcripts of the trial which the court had ordered journalists against doing."

Lawyers said that the prosector ordered referring the case of Mr. Rawashidah, and later Mr. al-Nimri's, to the civil court because the State Security Court was not the authorised body to look into such a case.

Mr. Rawashidah was arrested in front of the military court in Marka on Sunday and has since been held at al-Juwaydah prison in an unprecedented measure by State Security Court officials against journalists since the democratisation process was launched in Jordan in November 1989.

Mr. al-Nimri said he had told the prosecutor he was responsible for everything published in Al-Ahali, which belongs to the Jordan People's Democracy Party (Hashd), even though he might not necessarily read every article before it is sent to the printers.

"I told the prosecutor that I was morally and legally responsible for all that is printed in Al-Ahali," Mr. al-Nimri said. "But I also told him there was absolutely no intention of interfering or harming the judicial process of the ongoing trial, or the court."

Maj. Hijazi said that the transfer of the Al-Ahali case to an Amman civil court will need endorsement from the military attorney-general first.

Mr. Rawashidah is expected to be released on bail today, lawyers said. it was not clear whether bail will be granted by the military prosecution or the civil court. [passage omitted]

Al-Hariri Addresses UN General Assembly

NC3009175793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1553 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Address by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri to the UN General Assembly, UNGA, in New York—live]

[Text] Mr. President: It pleases me to begin my address by congratulating you on your election as president of the 48th session of the General Assembly and to commend your predecessor. I also express appreciation to his excellency Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali for his distinguished efforts to achieve the UN objectives and to shoulder its burdens in serving world peace. Current world changes place new responsibilities upon the United Nations, which Lebanon—its president, government, and people—view with hope and confidence. Everybody should work to provide the necessary means to meet these responsibilities. They should also acclimatize to the requirements of the coming phase full of new developments. I welcome the new states that joined the United Nations recently, thus affirming the comprehensive and universal nature of this organization and strengthening the increasing need for it.

Mr. President, in these last years of the decade, which will end a century in the age of mankind, we see a clear picture of peoples' issues, which we must treat with an open mind. The many struggles in this century have indicated that the road of peace is the best road after all the others have been tried. The division that has characterized the world and strained international relations for decades is over. The world is ready for a common view of mankind based on ideals and rights. The UN organization, which has long suffered disputes that have paralyzed its capabilities and frozen its potential is now facing increasing and unprecedented demands to preserve peace. If these demands exceed the traditional limits of the UN organization, this indicates the need for this UN reference, which inspires confidence and credibility and deals with issues and disputes justly and peacefully.

We believe that understanding among states and peoples depends upon providing democracy and safeguarding human rights. This helps to obstruct regional and international disputes and achieves one of the basic tenets of the UN system mentioned in its Charter. I wish to mention Lebanon's contribution to this Charter and the International Declaration of Human Rights through its participation in the committee that drafted them.

Lebanon, which firmly adheres to the principles of democracy, freedom, and human rights and has upheld these principles despite the dangers that have threatened it for many years, is loyal to the main pillars on which its diversified, open, and creative society is founded. Lebanon, which has overcome the years of ordeal that swept it, faces its crucial issues anew with strong and renewed national unity. Lebanon has entrenched these principles in its national constants. Its new Constitution stipulates its Arab character and affiliation, its role as a founding and effective member of the Arab League, and its adherence to its Charter. It is also a founding and effective member of the United Nations and adheres to its Charter and to the International Declaration of Human Rights. The state embodies these principles in every sphere without exception.

Lebanon's exceptional experience deserves your support. It also deserves a pledge by the world community, not only to extend financial aid and contribute to rebuilding the areas devastated by the [civil] war, but also to boost the Lebanese system, the like of which the world badly needs. Numerous ethnic and religious conflicts have broken out in various regions. Lebanon, long used to coexistence, moderation, and tolerance—one of its basic, humane, and noble values—can be a living model for those who seek successful formulas of coexistence, even in advanced societies. This is especially true of Lebanon today after it has crossed the bridge of tragedy to the shore of accord and harmony.

Most Lebanese people experienced the war and its consequences without believing in that war or its causes. Some 1 million students stayed on in school and university during the war, using their constant pursuit of learning to show they rejected the war. The same majority used to carry out its duties toward society and the state in many areas. Common crime did not noticeably increase during the war. All this proves that the Lebanese people have discovered harmonious coexistence, not only in written agreements, but also in their daily life. They are proud, after their long suffering, to offer the world a truly tested model of noble humanity, broadmindedness, and enriching diversity.

We must all take care to protect such an experience from violence. This serves everyone's interest, particularly in a region like the Middle East, which has suffered intervention, conflicts of interest, and strife that went beyond local and even regional boundaries to threaten world peace itself.

The magnitude of these fiery conflicts that flooded Lebanon also gave it the opportunity to demonstrate, by its ability to surmount them, that it is too strong to be obliterated, too noble to be written off, and one of the most steadfast homelands in the face of challenge.

Mr. President, Lebanon is committed to its ambitions, gambles on progress, and bets on the promising future horizons of our modern world. While the armed conflicts and strife of the past few decades have exhausted energy, these same capabilities must be devoted to confronting humanity's collective challenges. This is why the Lebanese Government seeks to regain Lebanon's status in the civilized spheres of endeavor, where the man of the future is being shaped. Lebanon believes that perhaps its greatest loss has been the emigration of many of its finest young people. We are seeking to create objective circumstances to get them back so that they might shoulder

their burdens and rapidly build that better society to which we all aspire, one of peace, liberty, and democracy.

Lebanon, with its history of suffering and turbulence, is particularly sensitive to all the tragedies engulfing other parts of the world. Lebanon has a lasting commitment to peace and the UN Charter and its principles. Lebanon wants to stress again its commitment to human rights, values, freedom, and dignity.

Mr. President, the United Nations grasped the reality of Lebanon's dilemma long ago. This is evident in the numerous resolutions passed by the UN Security Council concerning the Lebanese crisis. It may not be widely known that between 1968 and 1993, the UN issued 80 documents, including resolutions and declarations, on Lebanon. This multiplicity of resolutions is remarkable.

The General Assembly and the UN Security Council keep some hefty files on the Lebanese problem. Examined by any ordinary court of law, files like these would definitely tip the balance in Lebanon's favor and testify to the justice of its cause.

Justice and law remain on Lebanon's side. The Lebanese have long been distressed to see political interests outweigh considerations of justice and law and double standards overwhelm dozens of resolutions passed by this very platform in support of the just demands of a country that sought refuge in the United Nations and remains a firm believer in its legitimacy and effectiveness.

All the UN resolutions call for ending violence in Lebanon, respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and protection of its political independence and national sovereignty.

We must recall the initial interest that the United Nations showed in Lebanon, particularly on the need to implement Resolution 425. The presence of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] is a case in point.

I applaud the effective mission of UNIFIL and pay homage to the numerous sacrifices made by its personnel, some of whom died in the course of duty. To UNIFIL and the friendly countries participating in it, we offer our profound thanks and endless gratitude.

Looking to the future, we are proud to point out that we have taken firm and decisive steps toward restoring normal life. Syria has helped us to achieve this end, respecting weapons collection, ending hostilities, and rehabilitating the power of the state.

We are entitled to call on the United Nations, as it plays a new part in a changed world, to assume a vigorous role in Lebanon and take the necessary steps to ensure the implementation of Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's withdrawal to the internationally recognized borders.

We would not be exaggerating things to claim that peace in Lebanon remains instrumental to stability in the Middle East and to the prospects for a just and comprehensive peace in the entire region. Regional peace would remain in peril if the international community allowed conflict to fester in Lebanon.

Mr. President, the Lebanese have agreed on a new formula for national reconciliation, approved in 1989 in al-Ta'if. Saudi Arabia was instrumental in compiling this formula, which became a Constitution for Lebanon. Saudi Arabia continues, cooperating with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, to cooperate closely with Lebanon and to help it rebuild.

The government has begun a reconstruction program against a backdrop of renewed international confidence. Lebanon is rebuilding its regional and international role. Again, the Lebanese are hopeful, work hard, and take diverse and creative initiatives as they strive to rebuild their country.

Amid all this, Lebanon is confronting the logic of occupation and violence with a stance basically founded on the UN Charter and human rights. Our country, reinforced by its people's steadfastness, has repeatedly emphasized that it has the right to live with dignity on its free territory. The Lebanese Government is busy rebuilding and strengthening civil society in a way that promotes regional stability.

The Lebanese people have confronted Israel's acts of aggression, replete with obvious plans and intentions, with the utmost sense of responsibility, cohesion, and domestic unity. The Lebanese people's constant response to aggression has been insistence on peace and determination to revive their country, which paid dearly because of its use as an arena for settling accounts and conflicts.

This insistence on peace made the Lebanese people return immediately to their villages following the recent Israeli aggression. They pitched tents in front of their devastated homes, demonstrating the depths of their attachment to their peaceable land and their devotion to the goodness and fertility of its soil.

The facts about al-Khiyam detention camp are no longer a secret from UN officials, its members states, or the world. There, the Israeli military authorities unjustly and illegally hold more than 200 Lebanese individuals. Some 100 others are scattered among other jails inside Israel. Despite repeated appeals by the UN Human Rights Commission and Amnesty international and demands by the Lebanese Government and human rights societies in Lebanon and the Arab world, the concerned Israeli authorities have refused to release them. For more than eight years, they have refused to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross or the detainees' families to visit them.

It is time for Israel to listen to the calls of international organizations, immediately release the hostages, and end

their own and their families' suffering. It should do this in line with international norms and law.

Mr. President, the positive developments every day in Lebanon are the Lebanese people's best method of declaring that they refuse to allow their country to become the victim of the Middle East conflict again, when peace is looming on the region's horizon. Lebanon looks forward to peace and has gambled on it throughout its history. Lebanon's true sphere of activity is peace and stability. Its goal in the immediate vicinity and in the world at large cannot be fulfilled amid violence and war. Lebanon believes that if a just and comprehensive peace prevails in the Middle East, this region will perform untold services to humanity, because all its nations, including Lebanon, are youthful nations with an immense cultural heritage and diverse abilities. The capabilities that have long been squandered on war can now be diverted to the good of humanity and the environment in which it lives as we stand on the threshold of the 21st century and its expected civilization.

Based on this and proceeding from the regional and international changes that permitted negotiations with Israel, Lebanon joined these negotiations two years ago, although its territory was occupied in 1982 by an Israeli act of aggression, not as a consequence of war between the two countries. Lebanon is armed with UN resolutions, the first dating back 15 years, all of which call on Israel to withdraw, to specify the withdrawal's mechanism, and to begin to implement it.

If Israel uses the pretext of safeguarding the security of its northern border, we say that all the measures it has taken, beginning with its occupation, may have worsened the security situation and increased our and the international community's conviction that the only way toward regional security is to end the occupation of Lebanese territory and the tampering with its security and that of its people.

Mr. President, 45 years of conflict, war, and disputes have created particular ways of thinking. Changing them requires considerable political courage, deeper understanding by the parties concerned with peace, basic and direct support, and new means to translate this support into action to emerge from the framework of traditional means. The Middle East today more than ever needs new creative and courageous means to achieve a firm and stable peace.

Lebanon, which is participating in the peace talks to liberate its land and establish a fair and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, wants to clarify the following:

1. Lebanon calls for Israel's withdrawal from all the Lebanese occupied territories in implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426. The Lebanese Armed Forces will assume full responsibility for security in the south and western al-Biqa' if Israel implements these two resolutions.

2. Lebanon, which believes in and seeks peace, is the first to benefit from a comprehensive and fair peace. Lebanon, with its Arab brothers, will be one of the countries participating in making peace and will support and entrench peace as a basis of life in the Middle East.

3. Lebanon has lived through a harsh and painful experience because of the policy of unilateral and separate solutions. Lebanon believes that peace is indivisible, particularly in situations involving interdependent factors, such as the Middle East. Lebanon believes that isolated and piecemeal solutions will only cause renewed strife and turbulence. I would like to emphasize here, based on past experience, that there will be no stable and lasting peace in the Middle East without Lebanon or Syria. The latest Israeli-Palestinian agreement will only be a step, unless it is completed with radical solutions on the remaining Arab tracks. Lebanon, with its small area, delicate population balance, and limited economic capabilities, cannot provide a solution for the Palestinians who were uprooted from their land. The responsibility for their return and for ensuring an appropriate solution lies with the whole world. If we want to close the files of suffering in the Middle East, we must find a Palestinian solution that secures them a decent life commensurate with their and our societies' aspirations for man and his rights.

4. Lebanon, for the sake of peace, is ready to cooperate fully with the two cosponsors of the peace conference, especially the United States, to reach a comprehensive and fair solution that preserves the right of all parties to a lasting peace and ends, finally, conflict in the region. Lebanon is ready to shoulder its full responsibility to achieve this goal. Thank you, Mr. President. [applause]

Foreign Minister Buwayz Views Outcome of U.S. Visit

NC0110102593 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz in New York by Marcel Ghanim in Beirut; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ghanim] Mr. Minister, could you describe the atmosphere of the New York meetings and the practical results of your visit to the United States? It appears that there has been no real American response but only a repeat of the same positions.

[Buwayz] First, the visit comes at an extremely delicate stage in which the Middle East is witnessing major developments. The meetings were necessary to present the Lebanese side and to make sure that Lebanon and its interests in the peace process and the current changes are protected. Lebanon is trying to benefit from the situation rather than suffer from its negative implications. It was necessary for us, therefore, to hold these meetings at the center of the decisionmaking. The American decisions are now the most effective and the guide. Hence the importance of this visit at this particular time.

In principle, we sensed concern about the Lebanese question. We felt that the Americans were interested in supporting and activating the peace process after the Gaza-Jericho plan. There is a conviction here that the Gaza-Jericho agreement remains relatively isolated and there needs to be progress on the other tracks—especially the Lebanese and the Syrian tracks—so that they can become part of a comprehensive peace.

Therefore, the U.S. Administration may in the next few days make new dynamic moves—represented by the dispatch of envoys or delegations, or perhaps the U.S. secretary of state himself—to the region to prepare a declaration of principles before the end of this year, as President Clinton said.

It is clear that the Americans realize the importance of Lebanon's role and position. President Clinton has repeatedly mentioned this importance and his expectations from Lebanon in the peace process and the future of the Middle East. I believe that what we have heard here is reassuring. We, of course, emphasized some Lebanese constant principles and we discussed issues in detail. I can say that there is American understanding and support for Lebanon's position and requirements.

Concerning bilateral relations, this is linked, one way or another, to the general political situation. The United States realizes that the upcoming stage may be a delicate one dictating caution about U.S. interests. I believe that the pending bilateral issues, even though they will not be solved in the next few days, will perhaps be solved in the next few weeks.

[Ghanim] Have you been informed of this?

[Buwayz] Of course, in one way or another. The importance of Lebanese-U.S. relations and the need to improve them were emphasized, although this issue requires some work as it is related to certain (?regional) issues.

Al-Hirawi Leaves for Damascus To Meet With al-Asad

NC0110103493 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi left B'abda Palace for Damascus at 1110 today. He is expected to meet with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad at 1300.

Official sources told our radio that President al-Hirawi is expected back in Lebanon tonight. He will probably spend the night in Zahlah, where he is scheduled to deliver a speech at 1830 tomorrow, when the foundation stone for the Lebanese-French Hospital is laid.

Official sources said that President al-Hirawi and his Syrian counterpart will review regional developments in light of the Gaza-Jericho agreement and discuss their next moves amid reports that American officials will tour the region.

Implications of PLO-Israeli Agreement Analyzed

NC3009125993 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 29 Sep 93 pp 1, 15

[Article by Dr. Muhammad Jabir al-Ansari: "A View on What Happened and What Might Happen"]

[Excerpt] If Camp David represented in the final analysis the exit of the biggest Arab power from the arena of the Arab-Israeli confrontation, the Israeli-Palestinian agreement today represents a more serious "coup" by the Israeli-U.S. axis, which accomplished the Camp David agreement. It is difficult to believe that the United States was not aware of the Norwegian mediation between Israel and the PLO. But Washington pretended—in front of the other Arab parties and the Russian "partner"—not to know, to avoid embarrassment to itself and to others, because it was supposed to deal even-handedly with the various tracks and to support them equally. There is no argument that the "spectacular progress" on the Israeli-Palestinian track was clearly made at the expense of the other Arab tracks.

The tables of the Madrid Conference have been turned upside down, and the area has awakened to the reality of a joint political and economic cooperation between Israel and the official Palestinian leadership—this is if we want to avoid using the term "alliance" or "axis" between the two sides. Israel can now say to itself: The solution to the Palestinian issue (the Arabs' major issue) is now in our hands. What is left in your hands, O Arabs who support rejection and boycott?

This new reality in principle represents Israeli acceptance—for the first time in the history of the Zionist movement—of the idea of the existence of two peoples on the same land and the abandonment of a previous Israeli position, which was represented at its ugliest in Golda Meir's statement: "Where are the Palestinians? I don't see them!" It is still too early to tell whether the new agreement will achieve the minimum demands of the Palestinians to proceed toward the establishment of an independent Palestinian entity on an acceptable part of the territory occupied after 5 June 1967 for one basic reason: that the peaceful or military course of the entire process is still determined by Israel and its U.S. ally in light of the existing Arab and international balances of power.

But this reality, despite its harshness, must not conceal another harsh reality, which is that the Palestinians are citizens and human beings who cannot wait forever—and in light of the deteriorating Arab situation—without having a country to which they can belong and without having their own passport in this world. They are tired of waiting and being humiliated at the airports and borders of the countries of the world for more than 45 years.

If the Kuwaitis, who lost their country for a few months, were forced to get the assistance of all the forces on earth to regain their country, can the Palestinians be blamed if they ally themselves with the "devil" after all these long

years? Perhaps those Arabs who criticized the people of Kuwait and the Gulf in the time of "crisis" can now see how any person, even if he was the "vanguard" of Arab struggle, will place his hand in the hand of the devil when the issue pertains to a national homeland on the face of this earth.

In the long range, there are expectations that either the establishment of peace and a process of development and prosperity in the region that all parties can take part in will occur, or the "feeble settlement" will sooner or later collapse under the blows of the rejectionist forces growing under the influence of the fundamentalist current. But in the short range, other Arab parties in the negotiations have received a political blow that cannot be underestimated, despite the relatively moderate Syrian stand toward the Israeli-Palestinian agreement and despite the clever and quick—but deeply painful—circumvention by King Husayn in the Jordanian- Palestinian and the Arab and international arenas. In fact, it can be said that all the Arabs were "canceled out" when the U.S. President avoided even praising Egypt's role in the peace process!

The U.S. haste to sponsor the agreement and arrange that famous international television ceremony in the garden of the White House was, in fact, a joint Israeli-U.S. decision, designed to announce internationally the "solution" of the Palestinian issue according to the satisfaction of the American and Israeli allies and without paying any attention to the other Arab parties, particularly Syria and Jordan, (taking into consideration that Lebanon is primarily interested in its internal peace and not the peace of others, which it hopes will not turn into a calamity for it).

The American-Israeli haste to hold that television ceremony—which the Jordanian monarch described as "a political Disneyland"—looked like it meant to confirm the exit of the remaining Arab parties from the arena and to make them feel the need to accept the only solution on the table. This is what Jordan has reluctantly done and what Syria has been trying to avoid until now. [passage omitted]

Al-Shar' Speaks at Ministers Meeting in New York

JN3009205793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] New York—Arab foreign ministers held their annual meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' took part in the meeting.

The ministers discussed issues on the UN General Assembly agenda, particularly the resolutions that have to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question. They also discussed fair representation at the Security Council and increasing the number of its members.

The Syrian Arab News Agency [SANA] has learned that in a comment he made, Foreign Minister al-Shar' stressed the rejection of Israel's attempts to repeal some UN resolutions, saying that these resolutions are the property of the international community and not Israel's own. These resolutions are also part of the history of the United Nations.

Al-Shar' wondered how such issues are being raised, adding: Yesterday, the Israeli foreign minister spoke as if peace has been established in the region, even though Israel has not withdrawn from one inch of the occupied Arab territories. He added: Peace will not be achieved unless Israel withdraws from all of the occupied Arab territories.

Addressing his Arab counterparts, al-Shar' said: We do not blame the foreign nations that hailed what happened as if peace has been established. However, as Arabs and Muslims, we can never say that peace has been established unless Israeli occupation of all Arab territories comes to an end.

Al-Shar' also expressed amazement at what is being said about ending the boycott or about normalization, citing the speech delivered by Shim'on Peres at the United Nations, in which he gave the impression that the Arab states have now opened their borders to Israel—something that cannot be accepted by any Arab.

The foreign minister added: Syria will not accept any change to the resolutions that concern the occupied Syrian Golan, wherever they occur, and these attempts will be resisted.

SANA has also learned that the Arab ministers have formed a working group that includes Syria to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the foreign ministers with regard to the issues discussed and complying with what has been agreed upon.

Discusses Peace Process With EC's Claes

JN0110072493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' yesterday met with Willy Claes, Belgium's vice prime minister and foreign minister and chairman of the European Commission, on the fringes of the UN General Assembly session in New York. EC Commissioner Van den Broek attended. They exchanged viewpoints on the peace process and the impact the Palestinian-Israeli agreement will have on the next phase of the peace process.

Claes stressed the need to continue the peace process to achieve just and comprehensive peace. He stressed that peace in the region cannot be achieved without Syria.

Al-Shar' explained the danger of accepting the impressions Israel is trying to sell, to the effect that peace has been achieved in the region, while Israel has not yet withdrawn from the occupied Arab territories.

Discussion during the meeting also touched on Syrian-EC relations and means to strengthen them.

U.S. Arms Said To Give 'Teeth' to Israeli Peace

JN3009194093 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 26 Sep 93 p 9

[Article by Fu'ad Mardud: "A Peace With Teeth"]

[Text] Strike Eagle is not the name of a species of eagle or hawk. It is not a brand of matches that throws only sparks like our locally produced matches. It is the name of a new kind of strike aircraft the United States has decided to supply to Israel, along with other aircraft such as the F-18 Hornet, F-16 Falcon, and now, of course, the F-15 Strike Eagle, "to defend the peace it will sign with the Arab states." Therefore, it is not strange that the arrival of 24 U.S.-made Apache helicopters coincided with the conclusion of the so-called stormy session the Israeli Knesset held to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles.

It seems that the timing of this coincidence was set to make "others" understand that the desired peace in the Middle East region will have sharp teeth, and that Israel, which "has made and is making concessions for the sake of peace," is the party that should be supplied with these teeth in order to be able to bite the "peace opponents" to death any time it wants. This is a prize the peace sponsor gives in return for this "sacrifice." Since the financial aid Washington extends to each Israeli is greater than the aid the U.S. Government extends to each U.S. citizen from the federal treasury, then more weapons should be supplied to Israel. So, let these weapons be for assault purposes, especially since future peace "will be offensive and not defensive." The Apache helicopters, which have actually arrived in Israel, and the Strike Eagle, Hornet, and Falcon aircraft are all fighter planes designed for offensive and not defensive purposes. It also seems that

the proposed number of these aircraft—200—is in harmony with the U.S. perspective, and with the size of the peace Israel will sign with the Arabs at this stage. Based on this, it will not seem strange to increase this number every time the peace gets bigger.

Press Views Need for 'Comprehensive' Peace

Warns Against Partial Solutions

JN2909083893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 29 Sep 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper TISHRIN says that Israel is attempting to sidestep Syria's positive attitude toward the peace process, contending that the Israelis, with the blessing and support of some world capitals, are arguing that peace can be achieved in the region without Syria. Meanwhile, they have chosen to overlook a host of facts and elements Syria deems necessary to achieve true peace in the Middle East, the paper notes.

TISHRIN affirms that Syria's efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace grounded in the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace formula cannot be doubted. The paper indicates that Syria, out of concern for peace, is adhering to all Arab rights and demanding an end to Israeli occupation. This is because only this would herald just and comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN adds: The world has testified to the credibility of Syria, which cannot be taken by surprise, because it possesses a long-term panoramic pan-Arab perspective. Moreover, Syria is capable of distinguishing, with enlightened objectivity, between peace and capitulation.

TISHRIN believes that partial solutions cannot make true peace. Likewise, overlooking a key party, such as Syria, in the peace process would only further complicate the regional situation. Such a thing would kill the hopes pinned on the prospects for a just and comprehensive peace.

For its part, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: It is impossible for the Arabs to concede their pan-Arab rights, give up their territories, or endorse Israel's domination of the region's resources and destiny. The paper believes that the Israeli mind-set does not want to understand the lessons of history. It wants to sidestep facts by nursing delusions regarding the alleged historic accomplishment aired on television, which they want to use to obliterate the Palestine question, which is at the heart of the regional conflict, and dominate the region's resources and destiny.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The statements being made by Israeli officials indicate a growing anti-Syria campaign, as well as an inclination on their part to content themselves with the partial agreement and kill the peace process. The rationale they are advancing to corroborate their argument in this regard is that the Israeli public needs some time to digest the accord with the Palestinians. The Israeli officials are demanding that the Israeli public be appeased through additional gains. This is meant to show the skillfulness of Israeli officials. In this context, they are demanding an end to the Arab boycott of Israel, as well as a revocation of the international resolutions that are critical of its aggressive behavior.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Thus, Israel would make all possible gains without taking any single step that could promote the peace process. Moreover, this would render Israeli opposition a powerful force to be appeased, whereas the Arab opposition to any partial and renunciatory solutions must, according to Israel, be suppressed. Hence, Israel is turning its back on just and comprehensive peace and clinging to partial solutions, which it tailors to suit its policies and ambitions, completely overlooking the requirements of just and comprehensive peace.

Stresses Country's 'Key' Role

JN3009095893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 30 Sep 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH comments on Israeli intransigence toward the peace process, affirming that from the start, Syria has been concerned about the achievement of a just and comprehensive solution grounded in the principles of the UN Charter and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The paper adds: Syria is well aware that the Gaza-Jericho agreement was meant to preoccupy the Arab side with marginal issues, which could spark infighting, bloody clashes, and sharp contradictions that could eventually jeopardize and torpedo the peace process, consecrate the policy of forcing accomplished facts, and promote partial plans and solutions and separate deals, away from the comprehensive and just solution that would restore the territories and rights and put the region on the track of true peace. That is why Syria, through His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, reiterated its commitment to the continuation of the peace process at the Alexandria summit. Syria has once again thwarted Israeli designs and beleaguered the Tel Aviv rulers by asserting its commitment to the continuation of the peace process in accordance with the agreed terms of reference. Syria, which has always been concerned about and eager to advance the peace process, is now concerned, more than ever before, about the continuation of this process. It is eager to see this process continue in accordance with the spirit of the Madrid conference, and on the basis of the letters of assurance President Bush's administration sent to the parties concerned—the letters to which the Clinton Administration committed itself through the telephone conversations President Clinton held with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, and also through repeated statements made by U.S. Secretary of State

Warren Christopher. Now and in the future, Syria welcomes and will continue to welcome cooperation in this regard.

AL-BA'TH adds: This positive Syrian position stems from a strong and firm commitment to the cause of regional peace. It is not a transient or passing stand. Peace is not delivered in installments. It is not something that can be purchased. When the international community speaks of peace, rather than capitulation, everybody must acknowledge that there can be no peace as long as the occupation is maintained, and also that there can be no peace as long as usurpation, injustice, and aggression are consecrated. Moreover, only a just and comprehensive peace is viable in this part of the world.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: Syria is the key element in the Middle East peace process. Peace will neither be consummated, nor become true peace unless Syria is the mainstay of this peace. Such peace must return rights to their rightful owners and provide all with security and peace of mind. Under no circumstances will Syria accept the Israeli version of peace, which stipulates that Israel should have both land and peace.

Under the headline "The Clear Objective," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH affirms that Syria has consistently sought to fortify the Arab position against any Israeli penetration designed to impose suspect and flawed solutions based on interim measures and partial withdrawals. Syria, the paper notes, has warned against falling into the trap of separate settlements laid by Israel to entice the Arabs into solutions that would not realize the minimum of their just and legitimate demands.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Undoubtedly, Syria's emphasis on a comprehensive and just solution on all fronts stems from its clear eagerness to exploit to the utmost the current peace opportunity so as to achieve true and lasting peace in the Middle East. Syria has done its best to help achieve peace. It has done all it can to prevent the peace process from faltering and reaching a dead end. However, this positive Syrian stand has always run into Israeli intransigence, and into deceptive Israeli maneuvers. The bilateral talks have continued to mark time and revolve in a vicious circle, because the Israelis have always evaded any commitment to the basic components of true peace. They always resorted to deceitfulness and deception in a bid to waste time whenever the discussions addressed the condition of complete withdrawal.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Despite the rancorous Israeli campaigns, which have acquired a ferocious momentum in the aftermath of the signing of the agreement with the PLO, Syria continues to believe that there is a need to achieve just and comprehensive peace. It will continue to work earnestly and sincerely in this regard to achieve a solution that would ensure the restoration of all territories and rights. Under no circumstances will Syria accept any bargaining over, or leniency toward the full implementation of the relevant international legitimacy resolutions. At the same time, Syria will continue to adhere to the just and legitimate demands of the Arabs, which no party can concede or renounce.

Views 'Peace Equation'

JN0110082493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 1 Oct 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Our papers' political commentaries and studies today discuss the peace process, the principles governing its equation, and the comprehensive nature of the solution as a prerequisite for the just and comprehensive peace.

Under the headline "Peace Equation", AL-THAWRAH says: Since the start of the peace process, it has been clear that the required peace is based on a clear equation, and, in turn, on the full implementation of UN resolutions and the land-for-peace formula, in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace, whose basic pillar and premise are the full reacquisition of occupied Arab territories.

AL-THAWRAH notes that since the start of the Madrid conference, Israel has sought to bypass the firm facts at the core of this equation in an attempt to prevent the peace process from achieving its objective of a just and comprehensive peace that returns rights and lands to their Arab owners.

The paper says: This subversive effort, started by Yitzhaq Shamir with his well-known no's against the Madrid formula and the land-for-peace principle, did not abate with Rabin's assumption of the Israeli prime minister's office more than 15 months ago. That may have marked only a change in tactics. Shamir publicly rejected the peace formula and the objective of the peace process, while Rabin has pursued an evasive policy that bypasses the substance and requirements of peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: In both cases, Israel's objective was the same: To block the path of the peace process and torpedo the comprehensive peace formula on which the process was based, and replace it with a formula based on the logic of partial and phased settlements.

AL-THAWRAH notes that Rabin is taking advantage of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, whose each and every article and point is ambiguous. The paper says: This fact provides clear evidence that by its participation in the peace process Israel is seeking nothing more than a partial solution that retains most Arab lands and rights under its occupation, and enables it to avoid all commitments to the principles and foundations upon which the peace process was launched in Madrid. As specified by the U.S. initiative, these principles and foundations are the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the application of the land for peace formula.

AL-THAWRAH concludes its commentary by saying: If Israel, with its subversive efforts, is wagering on forcing Syria to make concessions at the expense of its national rights and the fundamentals of its principled position, then this wager will fail. Syria will not relinquish its rights or concede a single inch of its territory. Syria's position is clear and is, as President al-Asad had said, based on the fact that compromises on the issue of land are absolutely out of question.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH discusses the pretexts Israel uses to evade the peace process and the application of the resolutions of international legitimacy. It also discusses Israeli attempts to take advantage of the Gaza-Jericho agreement to find room for maneuver in order to escape all commitments to the peace process, and, consequently, to bypass the process and deprive it of its substance.

The paper says: What the rulers of Tel Aviv forget—and try to deceive the world about—is the fact that the Gaza-Jericho agreement is not peace or the entire issue. There are other Arab territories occupied in the Golan Heights, south Lebanon, the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, the holy city without which there can be no sound solution. The conflict is an indivisible whole, and so must be the solution. Any attempt to avoid this fact and ignore the other Arab parties to the conflict that are concerned with the peace process, and the attempt to lie in wait and deal separately with them with partial solutions, is an attempt that will not lead to the peace that has just and comprehensive foundations.

In its editorial today, AL-BA'TH notes that the U.S. Administration has announced a new diplomatic move to be carried out by U.S. Secretary Warren Christopher in the Middle Eastern states. The paper says that through its new move, the United States is seeking to guarantee a broader, more favorable march toward peace in the region.

AL-BA'TH says: This new move shows that President Clinton's administration is convinced that the region needs a just and comprehensive peace and that any peace not approved by Syria, and in which Syria is not its most important link, will not meet the level desired by international will.

AL-BA'TH adds: Therefore, Israel must become convinced that it has to accept what the world is demanding, and the requirements for a just peace in the region. If Israel is serious about peace and seeks to achieve it, then it must abandon its aggressiveness and the brutality employs against Arabs in the occupied homeland.

India

BJP Leader's Criticizes Clinton's Remarks on Kashmir

BK3009131693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has said that the reference to Kashmir by U.S. President Clinton in a speech at the UN General Assembly amounted to interference in India's internal affairs. Talking to pressmen in Lucknow, he said it would only provide encouragement to terrorists and Pakistan. Mr. Vajpayee urged the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, to make India's stand clear in the UN General Assembly not only on Kashmir, but also on nuclear nonproliferation.

Paper Views Prospects for Improved Ties With Iran

BK2909114193 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 24 Sep 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Better Indo-Iranian Ties"]

[Text] There has always been a strong sentiment in New Delhi and Tehran in favour of close bilateral relations. Indian policy-makers, whether during the cold war era or in the last two years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, have been fully aware of the strategic location of Iran as well as the potential for mutually beneficial economic collaboration between the two countries. What was desirable, however, could not be achieved in practice for various reasons, not the least of which was the Iranian political upsets especially in the 70s and 80s. Now that President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani seems to be in firm control and has a pragmatic approach to foreign policy issues, it is just as well that the Indian Prime Minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao has had wide-ranging discussions with him. Their survey of the new security environment in Asia will, hopefully, make it easier for India and Iran to cooperate in promoting regional stability as far as possible. Equally welcome are the improved prospects of an acceleration in bilateral commerce and joint ventures in infrastructure. The proposed pipeline project to make available to India a part of Iran's vast gas reserves must, in particular, be pursued with vigour. As economic dealings widen between the two countries, every care must also be taken to see that non-official channels, especially those with a dubious record, do not step in surreptitiously to defeat the purpose of giving a boost to genuine economic development of the two countries.

Inevitably, India-Pakistan relations especially the Kashmir issue, also figured in Narasimha Rao's talks in Tehran. There has been no evidence of any anti-Indian bias on the part of the Iranian leaders as far as Kashmir is concerned. However, Pakistani propagandists are never tired of trying to make out constantly that Tehran has fully supported the Pakistani case. This is why Iran's reiteration during Rao's visit that it regards Kashmir as India's "internal matter" is welcome. Notably, Iran has also joined India in strongly condemning acts of state-sponsored terrorism and blatant interference by some countries in the internal affairs of others.

No one expects that this will chasten Pakistan. In fact, it is more than likely that in response to the Indian Prime Minister's apparent success in clearing up, at least in Tehran, much of the confusion about Kashmir created by its propaganda machine, Islamabad will embark on a new campaign of misleading other capitals in West Asia. As in the past, Pakistan will make the most of its control over the Jeddah-based Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Conference [ICO] for this purpose. It will be helpful if the Iranians tell the Pakistanis at the next meeting of ICO at least that this anti-Indian belligerence does not go well with their purported interest in serious bilateral negotiations for a settlement of the Kashmir issue.

Politicians Blamed for Patronizing Terrorism

BK2909122193 Calcutta ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA in Bengali 22 Sep 93 p 4

[Editorial: "The Bloodstained Northeastern Region"]

[Text] There is no indication that the terrorism and secessionism that are prevailing in the northeastern region of India will come to a halt soon. In the past, only the Naga and the Mizo guerrillas were active in this region. At present, guerrillas have become active in other states, too, including Assam, Manipur, Tripura, and Meghalaya. Their objective is to achieve political freedom and secede from India. In the past, their target of attack was mainly army convoys, paramilitary forces on patrol duty, and police camps. They never used to attack the general people. However, they have now become reckless. The guerrillas of Tripura, Assam, and Mizoram have now started launching attacks on unarmed civilians and taking them hostage for ransom. They are also launching attacks on other tribes living nearby. Such an attack was launched recently in Manipur. Here the Kuki tribes were attacked by the Nagas. In Meghalaya, the tribal Khasi extremists have started launching attacks on the nontribals living in the state.

In fact, the politicians of this region are also responsible for these acts of terrorism. They utilize the terrorist groups for increasing their sphere of influence. For instance, let us take the case of Tripura. In this state, the activities of the TNV [Tripura National Volunteers] guerrillas led by Bijoy Rangkhal increased alarmingly during the rule of the Left Front government. Later, when the Congress-I came to power in this state, Rangkhal along with his men surrendered and were rehabilitated by the government. But another militant group known as ATTF [All Tripura Tribal Force] was launched and it started indulging in terrorism. It may be

mentioned that this group was patronized by the Communist Party of India-Marxist [CPI-M]. However, when the CPI-M came to power in the state, the ATTF surrendered and were rehabilitated. Within a couple of days another militant group known as NLFT [National Liberation Front of Tripura] led by Dhanjoy Reang started their activities. CPI-M has alleged that the NLFT has links with the State Congress-I.

It is believed that in Nagaland and Manipur the rivalry between the politicians are mainly responsible for the killings and clashes. In Assam, a faction of the Assam People's Congress had links with the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam]. It has been alleged that the chief minister of Assam, Hiteshwar Saikia, utilized a faction of the ULFA to create pressure on another faction. The politicians are busy pursuing their self-interest and utilize these terrorist groups to help face the challenge posed by their opponents. At present, these politicians in a bid to hide their role behind the activities of the terrorists and also their failure to curb terrorism have started blaming foreign intelligence agencies. They are saying that these militant organizations are receiving assistance from the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan and the military intelligence of Bangladesh. Perhaps, they are getting assistance. It is likely that foreign agents may try to exploit terrorists active on Indian soil.

The different tribal groups of this region are disgruntled as the central government has failed to keep the pledges given to them. The region supplies a lot of resources to the center but it is not being proportionately developed. The central government is spending a huge amount of money for the defense sector in the region on the plea of curbing terrorism. However, not even a fraction of this money is being spent on setting up industries to provide jobs to the educated, unemployed youths. It is quite likely that these youths make take up arms as they have become frustrated. They are also unhappy as the trade and commerce of this region is controlled by outsiders. After being voted to power, the politicians have become more interested in seeking the blessing of Delhi instead of taking measures to develop their respective states. Due to this, the northeastern region has remained neglected. A section of the local leadership in collaboration with the central leadership are contributing to an increase in the discrimination and deprivation already existing in the region. Some of these leaders are utilizing the underground extremist groups to achieve their selfish political goals. It appears that overall development of the region is the only way to resolve the prevailing crisis.

Ordinance Establishes Human Rights Commissions

BK3009010593 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] The president has promulgated an ordinance for the setting up of human rights commissions at the national and state levels. The ordinance also provides for the setting up of human rights courts at district level for the protection of human rights and related matters. Briefing newsmen, an official spokesman said that the national commission will be headed by a former chief justice of the Supreme Court. It will have two members, sitting or former judge of the Supreme Court and a sitting or former chief justice of a high court. Two members will be appointed from among the persons having knowledge of matters relating to human rights. The chairpersons of the three national commissions for women, minorities, and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes will also be the members of the commission. The appointment of the members and the chairperson of the commission will be made on the recommendations of a six-member committee headed by the prime minister. The commission will have the powers of a civil court for both summoning of witnesses and going into the violation of human rights. Its functions also include the review of factors relating to acts of terrorism and recommend remedial measures. Similar commissions will be set up at the state level. These commissions will submit an annual report to the center or the state goverments concerned, which will be placed before each house of parliament or the state legislature.

Commentary on Future Role of Human Rights Commissions

BK3009044793 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Commentary by Venudhar Reddy, All India Radio correspondent]

[Text] The ordinance to establish a Human Rights Commission clears the deck for setting up of a watchdog organization exclusively for going into the human rights violations. The constitution has provided for an elaborate judicial procedure for the protection of human rights. However, public opinion favored a National Commission on Human Rights, in addition. After deciding to establish such a commission, the process took quite some time, as the matter concerns sensitive issues involving various constitutional entities.

When the bill on setting up of Human Rights Commission was introduced in the Lok Sabha, the speaker referred it to the Standing Committee on Home Affairs for consideration. The committee, during its nine sittings, examined the bill clause by clause. The very step of issuing an ordinance underlines the urgency the government attaches to this matter.

The security forces in the country are working with great restraint while dealing with internal security duties especially in trouble-torn and terrorist-infested areas. The so-called human rights activists who are championing the cause of the terrorists are projecting a one-sided picture tarnishing the reputation of the security forces. It is obvious that this propaganda is aimed at affecting their morale. Since the procedure of summary trial exists in our armed forces, including the paramilitary forces

like the BSF [Border Security Force], ITBP [Indo-Tibetan Border Police], and the Assam Rifles, the procedure prescribed for a commission while dealing with these forces is slightly different.

The provision making the chairpersons of three national commissions on women, minorities, and scheduled caste and scheduled tribes as members of the Human Rights Commission will go a long way in protecting the interests of these weaker section of the society. Respect for human rights has alwtys been dear to India. Active press and responsive legislatures in the country are second to none in guarding human rights and exposing any violation. In spite of this, there have been complaints of violation, especially from abroad, some which were definitely motivated.

Being the largest democracy, India has always tried to be as transparent as possible. It allowed foreign human rights teams and press persons to visit troubled spots. It was only last month, that a team of international jurists visited Kashmir. The ordinance to set up Human Rights Commission is mainly to reinforce India's commitment to the cause. The very character of the commission in which jurists will have a majority must stop the frivolous and mischievous complaints in this regard. Apart from this, the commission must rise to the expectations of the people and clip the wings of persons who are taking law into their hands and suppressing genuine human rights.

Iran

Official: Republic Not Seeking Mass Destruction Weapons

LD3009124493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Mohsen Nurbakhsh, our country's vice president for economic affairs, has announced at the annual session of the World Bank and the IMF in Washington: Iran under no circumstances seeks to obtain mass destruction weapons.

According to an AP report, Mr. Nurbakhsh said: The Islamic Republic of Iran has reduced its military over in the past two years, and believes that any activities resulting in instability in the Middle East must be stopped.

Pointing out that Iran has signed the agreement banning the proliferation of chemical weapons, he said that America's extensive propaganda about the shipment of poisonous substances to Iran by a Chinese ship was a deliberate act of spite.

Foreign Minister Meets With Counterparts in New York

Discusses Regional Affairs With Cetin

NC3009135593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his Turkish counterpart Hikmet Cetin discussed the Serb attacks on the Muslims in Bosnia and the situation in Azerbaijan yesterday. Pointing to Iran's role in maintaining security and stability in the Persian Gulf, Cetin described Turkey's relations with Iran as important. He also asked his counterpart to explain why Iran opposes the agreement between the PLO and the occupying Israel. Velayati said no one can hold bargaining talks on the occupied territories, that is, sacred Palestine, without the consent of the Palestinian people.

Describing Jerusalem as the first point to which Muslims turned to pray, Velayati said the issue was binding on all Muslims and stressed that the Palestinian problem cannot be solved through propaganda activity. Velayati also urged Turkey to support what is right, without being influenced by foreign propaganda.

Stressing that the plan aimed to create a sensation instead of safeguarding the Palestinian people's rights and establishing peace in the region, Velayati asserted that it has given no guarantee for peace.

Addresses ICO on Bosnia, PLO-Israel Pact

NC3009132393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] has described the Islamic Republic of Iran as the greatest defender of the rights of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Hamid al-Ghabid told a meeting of the ICO member-countries' foreign ministers that was held on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York last night that despite persistent obstructions facing Tehran's assistance to world Muslims, everyone is now very well aware that the Islamic Republic of Iran has carried out its moral, humanitarian, and Islamic duties with all its might.

During that meeting our foreign minister underlined the duty of the world of Islam in defending the rights of Muslims. He criticized the behavior of the United Nations and especially of the Security Council vis-a-vis the Bosnia-Herzegovina problem.

A Central News Unit correspondent who has been sent to New York reports on the crux of Velayati's remarks on the Palestinian problem:

[Correspondent] Velayati said that some countries that pay great lip service to human rights but shortsightedly defend their own political rights are to blame for the Security Council's ineffective steps in confronting the

Serbs' constant aggression. He went on to say: The continuation of the occupation of Palestine, of the Golan Heights, and of southern Lebanon constitute yet another source of concern for the Muslim people of Iran and the only true and lasting solution to this problem is a confrontation with legitimate aggression as well as the fulfillment of the integral rights of the Palestinians, the establishment of a Palestinian government throughout the Palestinian territories, and the return of Jerusalem to the Muslims.

Velayati then attacked the recent accord between the PLO and the regime occupying Jerusalem, saying that this accord is unable to fulfill the rights of the Palestinians.

[Announcer] In another part of his remarks, Velayati stressed the need to help the people of Afghanistan.

Calls for Reconciliation in Tajikistan

LD3009131993 Tehran IRNA in English 1110 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] United Nations, New York, Sept. 30, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Wednesday [29 September] said that national reconciliation in Tajikistan is the only solution to save the republic. Velayati made the remark in a meeting with Tajik president, Imamali Rakhmanov. The two officials are among other participants in the 48th session of the U.N. General Assembly.

The Iranian foreign minister stressed that return of the refugees to Tajikistan as well as unity and solidarity in the republic were main factors for the development and reconstruction of the country.

Urges Greater Power for UN General Assembly

LD0110044393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Mr. Don McKinnon, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of New Zealand, met with the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati and discussed issues of interest.

In a meeting in New York last night with the head of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Samuel Insanally, Mr. Velayati stressed the need for creating a balance of power between the Assembly and the Security Council. He said it is needed that the UN General Assembly, which covers all member-states, regain its status in the organization's decisions before the Security Council. He expressed hope that the chairmanship of the representative of Guyana as a Third World country over the UN General Assembly is a proper opportunity to materialize the will of the majority in the UN decisions. Mr. Insanally stressed the need for changing the UN structure.

Meets With British, French Ministers

NC0110092893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 1 Oct 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati held individual meetings with his British and French counterparts yesterday. During these meetings, issues of mutual interest and important international topics were discussed. The special correspondent of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran to New York held brief interviews with Douglas Hurd and Alain Juppe after the meetings and elicited their views on the results of their meetings with Dr. Velayati.

[Begin correspondent recording] British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd announced that Tehran-London relations were improving and talks on eliminating the current bottlenecks in bilateral relations would continue between British and Iranian officials. In an exclusive interview with the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran following his meeting with Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati at UN Headquarters, he added: The subjects discussed between the officials of the two countries included regional and international issues.

A close knowledgeable source at last night's talks between the Iranian foreign minister and the British foreign secretary stated: The two sides stressed continued contacts between the officials of the two countries and the exchange of diplomatic viewpoints to broaden relations.

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe was also interviewed by the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran and said that his talks with the Iranian foreign minister centered around broadening Tehran-Paris relations and eliminating obstacles to mutual relations between the two countries. [end recording]

The British government radio [BBC] commented on these meetings this morning, citing British official sources as saying that no progress was made between the two sides. However, the British foreign secretary and the Iranian foreign minister concurred that talks should continue.

Other news sources at UN Headquarters reported that, following his meeting with Dr. Velayati, the British foreign secretary said that the difference of opinion between the two countries is still continuing. Before this meeting, he described the agenda of the talks as a heavy one and said that the latest developments in the Middle East, especially the PLO-Israeli accord, will be assessed in his meeting with the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign minister.

French Foreign Minister Cited on Policy Toward Tehran

LD3009215593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The French foreign minister has stressed that, contrary to America which follows a policy of isolating Iran, France has chosen the path of dialogue with Tehran. Alain Juppe stressed: France will pay no attention to various criticisms which are made of that country [as heard] in this field.

Concerning the problems existing in the relations between the West and the Islamic Republic of Iran, he said: Giving encouragement to the extremist religious groups and supporting them is the main problem. Juppe admitted that Islamic fundamentalism is a deep-rooted and widespread phenomenon. In an interview with the Arabic newspaper AL-HAYAH, published in Beirut [as heard], he suggested that greater economic assistance should be given to the countries which are fighting against fundamentalism.

Commentator Considers Purpose of Letter on Ties With U.S.

NC3009222193 Tehran SALAM in Persian 15 Sep 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Writer Unknown?"]

[Excerpts] It has been some time since the letter was issued on the need for relations and cooperation with the United States. No one has claimed responsibility for writing such a letter, but a Majles deputy's name was typed at the bottom. The Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution [MIR] issued a statement, No. 2, which criticized and rejected this proposal. SALAM published it. [passage omitted]

First, we should see why no one is claiming responsibility for a letter published some months ago that draws the attention of the rightist faction and most Majles deputies and why no one is denying it, not even the person whose name appears on the letter. We ask the esteemed speaker of the Islamic Majles to take the necessary steps to eliminate the ambiguity surrounding the issue concerning the Majles deputies and the person to whom it is attributed should clarify his stance on the issue. [passage omitted]

Our objective is not to exert any political or social pressure on anyone. But we should know who is responsible for the letter. Then the question will arise: Were those who were involved in endorsing the qualifications of such an individual and supporting him in the Majles elections aware of his way of thinking and of that of his cohorts? Or did they give their endorsement based on the sheer ignorance of a person and extend their support to him? In this case, it points to other problems in society: When there is an absence of political groups in society or they don't have the permission to develop and evolve, individuals strive to hide their thinking behind a false veneer of concurrence with others, which only surfaces after many years, when it is too late to rectify things.

If those who endorsed him knew of his way of thinking and backed him knowingly, the question is: Was such thinking acceptable that it was supported? Apparently not. [passage omitted]

If this is not the case, as these groups usually condemn this policy and thinking in their words and writing, then why have they accepted such people in their midst? If it was due to error or negligence, then today—when the veil has been removed from their thinking and we know it is not one individual who made such suggestions—why don't they clarify their stance officially against such individuals? This would eliminate the doubts of all those who voted for these people based on such support.

If we were to suppose that the letter is a fabrication and none of the deputies or officials had a hand in compiling or presenting it, shouldn't the person responsible for the action be identified and interrogated as to his thinking and why he was instrumental in generating such misunderstanding and suspicion concerning the individual or individuals loyal to the system and the imam?

Commentary: More to Anti-Libya Pressure Than Lockerbie

LD0110034693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1055 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] The end of the deadline set by Western countries against Libya is the topic of our second political commentary for today.

Tomorrow the deadline declared by America, Britain, and France against Libya concerning the surrender of two Libyans accused of planting a bomb in a passenger plane flying over Scotland, will end. Meanwhile, Butrus Butrus-Ghali, the UN secretary-general, has announced that Libya has agreed that the two men will be tried in Scottish courts. Of course, just as you heard in the news, the date of the trial has not yet been fixed. Meanwhile, it is not clear to what extent Libya's agreement will prevent the imposition of further sanctions against that country. [passage omitted]

Right now, Libya's cooperation in delivering the two accused and also, the deployment of all political skills and legal channels to put an end to this issue, have failed to bring about an ultimate solution to the crisis. This is because all the conditions point to the fact that current objectives concerning the question of Libya go beyond the issue of planting a bomb. Because the Lockerbie case is raised in various forms and sometimes attracts public opinion, it appears that the Western parties in the crisis are skillfully seeking to continue keeping it alive until they reach a series of their goals. What is striking in the course of the past five years when this crisis is discussed is that pressure against Libya depends on changes in the

behavior of that country—that is, a behavior that has to a large extent gotten closer to being fulfilled.

Western countries were really seeking to get Tripoli to revise its regional and international policies and refrain from adopting policies that were not compatible with those of the West. In this respect, placing Libya under pressure is discussed with consideration for different regional and international conditions. The manner of the implementation of this pressure takes on a new form. Even though, in the opinion of some political observers, the implementation of this policy has also led to some results, yet, because of wanting to have the initiative, Libya has not been able to show the kind of flexibility needed—under different conditions and with the escalation of the crisis—and seeks to resolve the crisis in accordance with internal and international laws.

In any case, political experts believe that even if Libya were to return its two nationals for trial to the Western parties in the crisis one cannot expect the West to refrain from bringing pressure to bear against Tripoli until it obtains the results that it desires. Of course, the point must not be overlooked that in the present climate that prevails over the Arab world—especially in North African countries—the intensification of Western pressures will have some negative results and will turn public opinion against these policies.

IRGC Commander Calls Iraqi Maneuvers 'Show for West'

NC3009215593 Paris AFP in English 1808 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Tehran, Sept 30 (AFP)—Recent Iraqi military maneuvers along the Iranian border were a show for the West, the head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard infantry forces said Thursday [30 September].

The Pasdaran [Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, IRGC] commander, General Mohammad 'Ali Ja'fari, told the daily RESALAT that the Iraqi maneuvers did not threaten Iran.

"To ease Western pressures, notably from the Americans, Iraq wants the West to believe that it can be of use militarily against Iran" and "that a force to counterbalance the Islamic republic exists in the region," he said.

"But we don't consider these activities a threat against Iran, we're ready and we have no defensive problem," he said about his troops who are the main defensive force along the border with Iraq.

In August, the Iraqi army conducted its most important maneuvers since the Gulf war of 1991 near the frontier with Iran.

In early September the Iraqi defense minister urged troops deployed along the border to maintain a "state of alert," accusing Tehran of carrying out attacks on Iraqi territory.

Background Provided on Finance Minister Candidate

LD2909124693 Tehran IRNA in English 1206 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 29, IRNA—President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Wednesday [29 September] proposed the new minister of economy and financial affairs. In a letter to Majles speaker, Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, the president proposed Morteza Mohammad Khan as the new minister of economy and financial affairs.

If Majles approves his credentials, Mohammad Khan will replace Mohsen Nurbakhsh, the only minister in President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's new cabinet who failed to secure Majles vote of confidence on August 15.

Following the Majles move President Hashemi-Rafsanjani appointed Mohammad Javad Vahhaji as the caretaker minister.

Mohammad Khan was born in Tehran in 1945. He served as deputy P.T.T. [post, telegraph, and telephone] minister when the late Mahmud Qandi was P.T.T. minister. He has also served at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the capacity of deputy of administrative, financial and parliamentary affairs.

Mohammad Khan was assigned to several posts during Ayatollah Khamene'i's presidency and in 1989 became acting minister of economy and financial affairs.

When the Islamic Republic Party was active, he was a member of the central committee of the party and was wounded in June 28, 1981 bomb blast in party's central headquarters in Tehran in which 72 people were martyred.

Government Announces Ministry, Staff Appointments

* Officers Named to Armed Forces Staff

93LA0239C Tehran SALAM in Persian 31 Aug 93 p 2

[Text] The cultural and defense propaganda deputy of the Central Armed Forces Staff Headquarters announced: Upon the suggestion of the head of the Central Armed Forces Staff Headquarters, the general commander of the armed forces, Ayatollah Khamene'i, appointed General 'Ali Sayyad-Shirazi as the acting head of the Central Armed Forces Staff Headquarters, the Basij brother Hoseyn Amir-Mo'ayyed as the logistics and industrial deputy, and Guard Corps Gen. Mostafa Izadian as the deputy for design, plan, and budget of the Central Armed Forces Staff Headquarters.

* Interior Ministry Deputies Named

93LA0239H Tehran SALAM in Persian 1 Sep 93 p 2

[Text] The public relations office of the Interior Ministry announced: In separate decrees by Mr. Besharati, the minister of interior, the following appointments were made.

- Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Sadroddin Shari'ati, as deputy minister for legal and parliamentary affairs.
- Engineer 'Ali Reza Tabesh, as political and social deputy.
- 'Ali Akbar Rahmani, as the deputy minister and head of the National Registration Organization.
- Rasul Zargar, as the deputy and coordinator of developmental affairs.
- Mohammad Amin Sazgarnezhad, as the administrative and finance deputy.
- 'Ali Qiamatiyun, as the plan and program deputy.

* Education Deputies Announced

93LA0239I Tehran SALAM in Persian 1 Sep 93 p 2

[Text] The students, research, administrative and financial affairs, and legal and parliamentary affairs deputies of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education were appointed in separate decrees by Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani.

According to the public relations office of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani appointed Dr. Fathollah Moztarzadeh as the research deputy, Dr. Mohammad Hoseyn Shoja'i-Fard as the legal and parliamentary affairs deputy, Dr. Mohammad Soleymani as the students' deputy, and Dr. Ebrahim Sana'f as the administrative and financial affairs deputy of this ministry.

Issuing other decrees, the minister of culture and higher education appointed Dr. Seyyed Ahmad Eftekhar-Hoseyni as the adviser to the minister for the deprived regions, Engineer Mahmud Ahmadinezhad as the adviser to the minister for cultural and social affairs, and Seyyed Hoseyn Fasihi-Langarudi as the director general for public relations of this ministry.

Dr. Hashemi-Golpayegani, in separate letters, thanked and praised Dr. Seyyed Javad Azhari, Engineer Esma'il Evini, and Dr. Ja'far Mili-Monfared, the former deputy ministers of research, administrative and financial affairs, and students of this ministry, for their valuable service.

Also, the legal and parliamentary affairs deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education in a decree appointed Reza Jam'ei as the director general for parliamentary affairs of this ministry.

* Supreme Council Secretary Appointed

93LA0240A Tehran SALAM in Persian 2 Sep 93 p 2

[Text] At the last meeting of the Supreme Cultural Council, attended by members of the council, Engineer Seyyed Mostafa Mirsalim was appointed secretary of the Supreme Cultural Revolutionary Council. He began his work officially in ceremonies attended by Dr. Hashemi-Golpaygani, minister of culture and higher education, and workers in the Supreme Cultural Council Secretariat.

It is necessary to mention that Eng. Mirsalim has been a member of the Supreme Cultural Council since 1368 [21 March 1989-20 March 1990].

* Khomeyni University Officials Named

93LA0240K Tehran SALAM in Persian 6 Sep 93 p 3

[Text] In separate orders by Dr. Mohammad Taqi-Khani, president of Imam Khomeyni (peace be upon him) International University, Engineer Mohammad Hoseyn Parvin-Niya, Mohammad Reza Solhju, and Mohammad Hasan Farjiha were appointed deputy for development, general manager of public relations, and general manager of university students, respectively, who have sacrificed for the revolution.

Pakistan

Kashmir Issue To Be Raised 'Forcefully' at UN

BK2909144293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] Pakistan will raise the issue of Jammu and Kashmir forcefully at the current session of the UN General Assembly. This was stated by a Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today. He said the foreign minister, Mr. Abdus Sattar, in his preliminary statement today will draw the attention of the world body on the tragic conditions in occupied Kashmir.

In New York, the foreign minister, Mr Abdus Sattar, has held talks on the Kashmir issue with his counterparts from key Islamic countries. The meetings were held on the eve of the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] ministerial meeting which begins today. It will consider all the major issues of common concern to the Islamic countries, including Middle East, the latest developments regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina, the occupied Jammu and Kashmir dispute and South Africa.

Clinton's Remarks at UN Cited

BK2909063393 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 28 Sep 93

[Commentary by A.B.S. Jafri]

[Text] The first address of the U.S. President Bill Clinton to the General Assembly of the United Nations marking the 48th session is significant in many ways and it would

carry different messages to different parts and peoples of the world. In its universal plea, Mr. Clinton's message sets out the concern of the United States about peace in the world, that is, according to what Mr. Clinton said, the top priority of the United States. World peace is an ideal which has eluded the mankind, but as an ideal it continues to inspire human endeavor. At the end of the 20th century, thinking men and women all over the globe must be wondering why peace remains as difficult to achieve as it has ever been. The most menacing threat to peace and peace time has been the Cold War which kept all the mankind in veritable bondage for half a century. And now that the Cold War is behind us, peace is still not in sight. According to one estimate, even today, nearly 30 big and small wars are raging in various parts of our planet. Not the least dangerous to world peace is the veritable war that has been raging in those parts of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which are under the Indian occupation.

Although the Indian occupation of this part of the world is now half a century-old, during the last four years the people under the Indian occupation has been in a state of open rebellion against subjugation. During the less than half a decade of escalation of the freedom struggle, the occupying power has introduced full-scale military rule. All civil organs of administration have been suspended because they had become unsustainable. It is military action against the people wanting to be free. The military authorities have failed to subdue the uprising. Their only option now is the use of overwhelming force in the hope of breaking the will of the nationalists. But what application of inordinate and callous violence against civilian population has produced is an uncontrollable revolution. Not knowing how to hold the [word indistinct] against a determined uprising, the Indian armed forces have gone on a rampage. Abuse of human rights is all that is left for the Indian armed forces to rely on for their own presence in a sea of rebellion.

By making a pointed reference to the Kashmir problem in his address to the United Nations General Assembly, President Clinton has done nothing more than to take notice of a problem which can no longer be brushed under the carpet without reckoning with a major threat to world peace. Pakistan has all along, that is for half a century, strived to solve this problem. It has left no forum on international stage. The Kashmir dispute has been on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly ever since it was raised on the UN floor by the government of India's first prime minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Once again, Pakistan's foreign minister, Mr. Abdus Sattar, has invited the world body to pay heed to the flame which threaten to spread far beyond the still undefined borders of the disputed state. Given goodwill, the Kashmir dispute can be settled in no time and without much ado. In the first place, it should not have arisen at all. The people of the state should have been given [the opportunity] to decide their future. That could have been settled in 1947 even without reference to the United Nations.

And once the world body was seized of this matter, it could have proceeded to ascertain the choice of the people concerned. The Governments of Pakistan and India could have settled the matter between themselves. The UN appointed a plebiscite administrator to (?mediate) and passed scores of resolutions. Every effort to sort out the dispute has so far been set at naught by New Delhi. Succeeding governments in India had changed positions, procrastinated and prevaricated, and gone back on solemn pledges. Even today, spokesmen in New Delhi speak in different voices at the same time. On the one hand, they say they are willing to discuss the dispute, on the other, they say there is nothing to discuss. They accept there is a dispute and they insist Kashmir dispute is not negotiable. They agree that Kashmir is a disputed state and then insist Kashmir is an integral part, the atut ang [Hindi for integral part], of the Indian union. While all this goes on, the Indian Army is busy in a military operation which has yielded nothing except death, destruction and misery and the refusal of the people fighting for their freedom to be daunted only proves one point that the people of the occupied Kashmir have given their final verdict. It is written in blood, it reads simply: We want freedom from India and accession to Pakistan.

U.S. 'Policy Shift' Lauded

BK2909111993 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 29 Sep 93 p 7

[Editorial: "The Active Volcano"]

[Text] The festering Kashmir question has finally been taken up by U.S. President Bill Clinton in his address to the United Nations General Assembly. Referring to the violence around the world, Clinton bracketed Kashmir with other major conflicts such as the devastating civil war in Angola and the genocide in the Causasus. Giving the Kashmir issue the same significance as these other conflicts negates India's consistent stand that reports of brutalities in Kashmir are exaggerations and propaganda. India has maintained that the conflict in Kashmir is limited to Kashmiri militants fighting Indian security forces. Civilian casualties have been dismissed as peripheral. But Clinton described Kashmir as an active volcano on the map of the world and suggested the UN General Assembly pay urgent attention to the problem. Furthermore, Clinton said that the Kashmir issue was not a simple bilateral problem involving certain nations, i.e., India and Pakistan, but a matter for international concern. This is the most significant policy shift on the Kashmir question in years. The world community at large has taken safe refuge in the stand that it could not intervene because Kashmir was a bilateral issue between Pakistan and India. Sympathetic nations have voiced their concern diplomatically, others have merely salved their consciences by calling on India and Pakistan to settle the dispute under the Simla Agreement and relevant UN resolutions. It is imperative that a resolution on human rights abuses in Kashmir, expected to be moved in the UN, be supported by the international community

in the light of events that have savaged the once scenic valley of Kashmir and its environs. These resolutions have to be passed and enforced. Kashmir has been on the back burner for far too long and Indian intransigence has kept it at a low priority on the international agenda, since several western countries have been anxious not to annoy India.

Now this seems to be changing. We must respond to this new breakthrough swiftly. Pakistan has kept up a strong diplomatic initiative by placing the Kashmir issue high on the agenda of organisations such as the Organisation of the Islamic Conference [OIC]. This April, the foreign ministers of the OIC agreed on a resolution that allowed for the imposition of strict measures against India if it did not end repression in Kashmir. Clinton in his first address to the UN has given Kashmiris and Pakistan renewed hope that the international community will respond to the crisis. Too many international issues have been allowed to fester until they degenerate into intractable problems as happened in Bosnia. The Kashmir problem can be solved and need not become one of this centure's tragedies. The US is in a position to press for a plebiscite in Kashmir that will allow Kashmiris to determine their own fate. Pakistan will honour the results of such a plebiscite. It is what the country has always sought.

Wasim Sajjad Affirms Support for Kashmiris

BK3009035893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Acting President Wasim Sajjad has said that the people and the armed forces are firmly committed to the country's defense. Addressing a gathering of soldiers at the Northern Light Infantry center in (Punji) in the northern areas yesterday, he said some of our (?neighbors) consider our sincere desire for peace as our weakness, but I would like to make it fully clear that we cannot be browbeaten by threats. We are fully aware of the changing situation of the region and are not indifferent to the aggressive designs of certain powers and we are determined to make our defense an indispensable one. Expressing deep concern over the brutal atrocities perpetrated on the Kashmiris, the president reiterated Pakistan's stand to continue its moral and political support to their struggle for freedom. He lauded the valor, patriotism, and services of the Northern Light Infantry.

Foreign Office Views Russian Political Situation

BK3009023593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0100 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Pakistan has expressed hope that the current political crisis in Russia will be resolved peacefully in accordance with the aspirations of the Russian people. A statement issued by the Foreign Office says that the Russian people have made considerable progress along their chosen path of democracy and economic reform. Pakistan considers the events that unfolded in Russia last week to be Russia's internal affair. Nevertheless, Pakistan cannot remain aloof from these events in view of Russia's position as a global power and its long-standing relations with South Asian countries. The government is carefully reviewing the situation in Russia.

Embassies, 'Campaign Centers' Reportedly Close

BK2509032893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Sep 93

[Text] Pakistan has decided to close down its embassies in eight countries and information centers in another seven. Reports suggest that this decision is to save the country's dwindling economy following heavy expenditure on abetting terrorism in Kashmir. It will close its embassies in Tanzania, Namibia, Somalia, Hungary, Mexico, Germany, and former Yugoslavia. The information centers which were mostly engaged in anti-India and pro-terrorist propaganda were in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Italy, Canada, and Australia. Agency reports say that the number of federal divisions has been reduced from 40 to 34, throwing about 2,500 employees out of jobs.

Caretaker Prime Minister's Economy Drive Outlined

BK2209110793 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 22 Sep 93 pp 1, 4

[By Zafar Malik]

[Text] Islamabad—Federal cabinet has decided to close 15 commercial and information offices abroad, appoint a tax ombudsman and an urban land commission. It also decided to raise pensions and allowances of ex-president Ghulam Ishaq Khan substantially.

Chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Moin Qureshi the cabinet held its regular weekly session for four hours on Tuesday [21 September] and its decisions were announced by Federal Information Minister Nisar Memon at a press conference.

The cabinet has also advised provincial governments to economise by cutting their expenses and surplus staff. Memon said ordinances will be issued with a week [as published] by the provincial government to enforce tax on agricultural income in the light of economic package announced by the caretaker Prime Minister.

Memon said caretaker government had no soft corner for self-exiled Muriaza Bhutto who was contesting elections and said to be returning home this month. "He is not a friend of mine or the prime minister's", said the minister referring to a statement of Mr. Qureshi in which he said law of the land would take its course and nobody was above the law.

Memon said the federal government would reduce the number of federal employees. Out of 15,000 employees only 2,500 had been declared surplus and they too would be absorbed gradually in public sector companies and

departments as and when a vacancy occurs. Fresh recruitment has been stopped and employees are encouraged to seek early retirement.

Memon also revealed that Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) would soon become an autonomous corporate body which would greatly enhance its efficiency and facilities for the benefit of the general public. The cabinet reviewed process of implementation of the economic package and expressed its satisfaction over the pace of recovery of loans and arrears of utility services from the defaulters.

The information minister said his ministry would reduce its staff by 30 percent, withdraw press attaches from seven world cities including Canberra, Ottawa, Rome, Riyadh, Colombo and Nairobi. The commerce ministry will close eight out of 41 sections operating in Pakistan embassies.

Memon said in terms of reductions of expenses at the federal secretarial level, number of divisions would be reduced from 46 to 36 by abolishing some and merging others in the light of the Economy commission report. Various local governments each as CDA [Capital Development Authority] and LDA [Lahore Development Authority] are likely to hand over the job of collection to private sector.

Regarding loan defaulters, he said so far Rs [Rupees] 287 million had been recovered. The best performance was shown by gas companies which succeeded in recovering Rs 104 million out of arrears amounting to Rs 252 million. No figures were given about the performance of Pakistan Telecom Corporation, but the minister said a total of 220,000 telephones were disconnected and 64,604 restored on receipt of arrears.

WAPDA [Water and Powr Development Authority] Act is being amended to recover outstanding power consumption bills. The cabinet resolved to launch a vigorous drive to recover power bills and legal action is to be taken against the defaulters.

Karachi Electric Supply Corporation wil be privatised through Privatisation Commission. As many as 50 percent officers and 30 percent staff of Cotton Export Corporation and Rice Export Corporation have opted for voluntary retirement, Memon informed the newsmen.

It was also decided to establish a commission to formulate urban land policy to recommend standardised town planning and transparent policy for the allotment of state land.

The commission will have representation of public and private sector including representatives of Federation Chamber of Commerce and Industries, association of buliders architects and town planners.

Memon said the decision to appoint tax ombudsman has been taken in view of a large number of complaints lodged by the people from time to time against the government functionaries. The ombudsman will act on the pattern of federal ombudsman to give fair treament to the tax payers.

Income Tax Target 'Fully Accomplished'

BK2709113993 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 26 Sep 93 p 13

[Text] Karachi—Southern regional income tax commissioner A.S.K. Sheerani, said here on Thursday [23 September] that the income tax target of about Rs. [rupees] 24 billion billions for the last year has been fully accomplished.

Speaking at the FPCCI [Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry], he said wholehearted efforts are being made to achieve the next year's target of Rs.30 billion.

He sought the intervention of the business community to achieve this target, saying that without the cooperation and assistance it will be difficult to meet the target.

Sheerani stressed that both the Income-tax officials and the members of the business community should work in unison as he felt that unnecessary confrontation could not lead to fruitful results.

He said it was the duty of every Pakistani to contribute towards progress and prosperity of the country. At the outset, the Income-Tax Commissioner clarified that no raids were conducted against the business community and said that it were just "normal visits" and should not be construed as "raids".

During the meeting the business community agitated very much the sending of income tax officials to their business centres and the publication of the "income tax payers directory", saying that such actions will be detrimental to the future relationship of the business community with the Income tax department.

Sheerani explained that the government fully believes in cooperation and is against the policy of confrontation and added that the visit of income tax officials should not be wrongly interpreted.

Minister Lists Objectives of Tariff Reforms

BK2909150493 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] The federal minister for commerce, Dr. Hafeez A. Pasha, today announced tariff reforms aimed at rationalization of tariff sector to improve efficiency in domestic activities, especially in industry and resource allocation. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, the minister outlined the tariff reforms strategy.

[Begin Pasha recording] The first objective was, of course, to design a tariff structure which removes the anti-export bias which is prevalent in our existing system.

The second objective is to create a more neutral protection structure for import substituting activities.

The third objective is to reward efficiency.

Fourth objectivity is to promote industrialization through greater encouragement to higher value added acitivities.

Another objective is to give relief to our consumers through reduction in prices wherever possible.

The seventh [as heard] objective is to simplify our tariff system and to reduce arbitrariness and discretion. And finally, the eighth objective is to reduce the incentive and the return or profit from smuggling. [end recording]

Parties Agree on Mutual Support in Elections

BK2509160493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Sep 93

[Text] Pakistan People's Party [PPP] and Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo Group have agreed in principle to support each other's candidates in the coming general elections for national and provincial assemblies. The decision was announced by leaders of the two parties at a joint press conference in Lahore today.

Armed Forces' Role in Coming Elections Commended

BK2709122993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Sep 93

[Text] Chief Election Commissioner retired Justice Naimuddin and Justice Sheikh Riaz Ahmad, a member of the Election Commission, have expressed satisfaction at the plans prepared by the armed forces to assist in the conduct of elections in a fair and peaceful manner. In their comments on the role of the military, they said the commission is grateful to the armed forces for their positive response to the Election Commission's appeal for assistance to ensure transparent and credible elections. They expressed the confidence that the presence of the military personnel—deployed to assist the civilian authorities—on election day will keep the election atmosphere free from all kinds of intimidation and irregularities. The chief election commissioner and the commission member said that about 400,000 officials belonging to the judiciary and the civil administration have been assigned the task of conducting elections.

Commonwealth Observers Group Briefed on Elections

BK2909145093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] In Islamabad today, a 15-member Commonwealth observers group exchanged views with the prime minister, Mr. Moin Qureshi, on the forthcoming general elections. The group was led by Mr. (Clyde Griffith), the president of the legislative council in Western Australia and former chairman of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The group is in Pakistan to observe the conduct of forthcoming general elections in accordance with the laws of Pakistan.

Talking to the members of the delegation, the prime minister enumerated various measures taken by his government to hold free, fair and impartial elections. Mr. Moin Qureshi assured that his government is determined to move all the forces to create an environment in which nobody can tamper the electoral process or create obstacles in holding free and fair elections. During frank exchange of views, the prime minister also gave details of his economic package and the measures to bring back financial discipline in the economy of the country.

The leader of the Commonwealth delegation praised the measures taken by the prime minister and said that he has done much within few weeks. After the meeting, Mr. (Clyde Griffith) talked to the PTV [Pakistan Television] correspondent M.Z. Sohail.

[Begin recording] [Sohail] Would you please comment on your meeting with the prime minister?

[(Griffith)] Well, the observers group was very honored indeed to have the opportunity to speak to your prime minister whose work is being hailed around the world, as a matter of fact, and we had a very frank discussion with him in which he outlined the work that has been done by his interim government toward ensuring that your elections will be free and fair. We were very impressed with him and very delighted that he was prepared to be so frank in responding to the questions that we put to him. [end recording]

Sri Lanka

'At Least 20 Soldiers' Killed by Tamil Guerrillas

BK2909125693 Hong Kong AFP in English 1203 GMT 29 Sep 93

[Text] Colombo, Sept 29 (AFP)—Tamil guerrillas Wednesday [29 September] killed at least 20 soldiers and lost dozens of their own men in fierce fighting with government troops in northern Sri Lanka, military sources said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas were involved in heavy clashes in the outskirts of the key Elephant Pass army garrison in the Jaffna peninsula, the sources said.

Security forces had recovered about 20 LTTE bodies so far but the Tigers were believed to have suffered more than 50 casualties in the latest military offensive that was launched in the peninsula Tuesday, the sources said.

Military officials said the fighting remained intense as government troops backed by air cover continued a thrust into LTTE-held territory in the peninsula.

"The operation is in progress. The troops are pursuing the Tigers. This may turn out to be a bigger operation than what we had planned," said a military official.

Security forces launched the offensive under cover of an indefinite curfew in a bid to destroy LTTE positions near the army's forward defences at Elephant Pass, which also serves as the entry point to the peninsula.

The LTTE is fighting for a separate state in the northeast for Sri Lanka's two million minority Tamils who are concentrated in the region. Thousands have died in the separatist conflict.

Advances by Government Troops Reported

BK3009114093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1111 GMT 30 Sep 93

[Text] Colombo, Sept 30 (AFP)—Advancing government troops backed by fierce air attacks fought with Tamil guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka for a third day, in pitched battles that left nearly 300 dead, military sources said.

Heavily-armed Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas killed 96 government soldiers and lost more than 150 of their own men in fierce fighting in Jaffna peninsula in the past 48 hours, the sources said.

Air force helicopter-strafing caused 14 more civilians deaths, Tamil sources said. Intense aerial bombardment had killed 25 civilians in three separate northern areas Wednesday [29 September], the sources said.

LTTE rebels offered heavy resistance as troops backed by the airforce and naval attack craft moved northwest towards Chavakachcheri from their forward defences at the key Elephant Pass camp, a defence ministry spokesman said.

"Resistance has been heavy. We estimate LTTE casualties to be much higher. Ground troops have so far found 44 LTTE bodies," the spokesman said, adding that the operation continued under a blanket curfew in the peninsula.

"I am aware of more army casualties but figures canno@ be confirmed," the spokesman said. Unconfirmed reports put the army death toll at more than 125.

Security forces imposed curfews in Jaffna and Kilinochchi district on the mainland before launching their latest offensive Tuesday with the aim of demolishing LTTE positions in the outskirts of the Elephant Pass base.

The latest military thrust is the biggest since President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga took office after the May 1 slaying of his predecessor Ranasinghe Premadasa by a suspected LTTE suicide-bomber.

Wijetunga has repeatedly vowed to end "the terrorist" menace in the island's northeast, home to Sri Lanka's two-million minority Tamils. The LTTE is fighting for a separate Tamil state called Eelam in the region.

Tamil sources said the army advance had run into fierce resistance and expected troops to face a massive LTTE counter-attack in case they decided to enter the well-fortified Chavakachcheri area.

"Troops have so far advanced about eight kilometers (about five miles) from the first day of operation. They are now about 12 kilometers (eight miles) from the Elephant Pass camp," the spokesman said.

The LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran also had his base in Chavakachcheri before he moved his hideout to an undisclosed location elsewhere in the peninsula following heavy fighting in the region two years ago.

"Troops also cleared well-fortified terrorist defensive positions. Air force ground attack aircraft and artillery effectively engaged and destroyed most of the terrorist bunkers," a defence ministry statement said.

Government forces could try to seal off a ferry point used by the LTTE to operate a boat service between the peninsula and the mainland via the Jaffna lagoon, a senior army officer said.

"Original plans can change according to the ground situation. Any deviation from those plans is the prerogative of commanders at the scene," the officer said.

Colombo declared the lagoon a no-go zone a year ago but thousands of Tamil civilians have risked navy fire by travelling in LTTE- escorted boats between the peninsula and the mainland.

The military banned boat traffic in the lagoon to prevent LTTE guerrillas from smuggling arms and ammunition between their hideouts in the peninsula and the mainland. The LTTE announced Tuesday it was suspending the ferry service.

In separate attacks in easter@ Sri Lanka, army troops killed 11 more LTTE guerrillas and seized three automatic weapons and communications equipment, the defence ministry spokesman said.

Thousands have been killed in the LTTE-led campaign for independence.